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ABSTRACT

With each issue focusing on different themes, volume 18 of "Inside English" looks at he revitalizing literature, teaching as a subversive activity, writing at all levels, and the English classroom of the 1990's. In addition to regular columns on the English Council of California Two-Year Colleges (ECCTYC) and legislative concerns, the following feature articles are included: (1) "The 1990 ECCTYC Literature Conference: On Humpty Dumpty, James Joyce, and Transforming Teaching" (Karin B. Costello); (2) "From Movies to the Page: Using Film to Teach Literature" (Patrick Kennedy); (3) "Teaching and Acting "Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead': Roles and Responsibilities and Life on the Margins" (Judith Ackley); (4) "At the ECCTYC Lit Conference: Focusing on the Wrong Side of the Issues" (Michelle Pagni); (5) "In Defense of Theory: An Exploration of Fear and Defensiveness" (Bernard Goldberg); (6) "A Curriculum for the Nineties: Developing a Social Conscience through Literature" (Kathleen Murphy); (7) "Risk-Taking and Writing: Disputatious Classrooms" (H. W. Seng); (8) "Striking Fire in Our Students and Ourselves: Our Work in Story and Song" (John Lovas); (9) "Talking and Listening: Let's Hear It for Oral Reading" (Joseph Collignon); (10) "The Illusion of Progress: Where Are We Going? Where Have We Been?" (Mike Guista); (11) "Deconstruction and Demograhics: 'The Center Cannot Hold'--Or Can It?" (Phyllis Mael); (12) "Literacy and the Classroom: What an English Teacher Should Teach" (Sandra Christenson); (13) "College Survival English: Building Communication Skills AND Self-Esteem" (Ulrica Bell-Perkins and Diane R. Holt); (14) "Ideology, Pedagogy, and Politics: Writing As Confusion OR What and Why We Teach" (Gordon Taylor); (15) "Writing the Research Paper: Using Questions to Direct Research" (Diane Jefferson); (16) "Paraphrasing Right and Left" (Joseph Collignon); (17) "How to Teach English 1A: Nine Easy Steps" (Jack Jackson); (18) "Writers and Their Readers: Wrestling with the Audience" (Anne Huber Stark); (19) "Using Grants for the English Department: Bridging the Barriers between Full- and Part-Time Faculty" (Peter Sotiriou); (20) "The Amateur in

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ENGLISH COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA TWO-YEAR COLLEGES — CALIFORNIA REPUBLIC — ECCTYC

inside english

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inside english

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THE 1990 ECCTYC LITERATURE CONFERENCE

On Humpty Dumpty, James Joyce, and Transforming Teaching

by KARIN B. COSTELLO
Santa Monica College

Last April's ECCTYC Conference, held at Lake Arrowhead, focused on teaching literature, with particular attention to critical theories. It was stimulating and refreshing, recalling for me the best aspects of graduate school. I read the assigned texts, listened to the lectures, participated in peer workshops, became acquainted with my colleagues from other campuses, took long walks around the lake, enjoyed uninterrupted periods of time to think, and left feeling restored and with a notebook-full of ideas to incorporate in my classes.

But, for me, the conference had a value far beyond the specific insights into texts or critical theories and the personal pleasures of making new friends and enjoying reflective time away from the hurly-burly of classroom life. The conference was the culminating experience in a year that has transformed my approach to what I teach and the way I teach it. First, it provided another reason for a more eclectic approach to course materials and textual interpretations in introductory literature courses. Second, it persuaded me of the value of a much less dominating (authoritarian) role for me as a teacher.

I started out life as a "traditional" student, then teacher of English. During my first full-time year (1989-1990) at Santa Monica College, I discovered from my own observations in class and the data that I read as a member of the Affirmative Action Advisory Committee that we had an extraordinarily diverse student body—whether viewed from the standpoint of age, ethnic background, national origin, race, academic preparedness, or motivation. A substantial segment of my students simply were not getting the traditional curriculum or responding to the traditional (authoritarian) lecture method, or both. I had to do something or risk "losing" them.

So I was delighted when formal programs on my campus and informal exchanges among colleagues introduced me to new curricular resources and teaching methods. I experimented with some of these, tentatively at first and then with greater confidence as the year progressed. The results were rewarding. Including more readings from Black and Latino literature and from non-Western cultures helped me reach and "hook" students who otherwise might have remained passive or found the course readings alien and intimidating. Through reading Baldwin's "Sonny's Blues," one Chicano student, who had been very hostile to several African American students in the class, discovered that they shared common ground. The entrapment and frustration of Baldwin's Harlem inhabitants echoed his own experience in the barrios of East Los Angeles.

More participative and collaborative learning strategies empowered students to take the initiative, ask more questions, demand more of themselves, and assume more responsibility for learning. Toward the end of the spring semester, I divided my introductory literature class into working groups of five to seven students when we read *Lolita*, by no means an easy book. Each group responded to a different question, first through discussing

their ideas with each other, and then by individually writing up a two- or three-page essay response. I moved among the groups, asking and answering questions to get things going, but mostly listening. The students had strong reactions to the book and within each group there was disagreement. To defend their positions, they were forced to go back to the book for supporting details. They had to reason with each other, define terms and values, make logical connections, and qualify absolute assertions. Students who usually had little to say or didn't know how to begin to analyze a difficult text watched and imitated their peers struggling with *Lolita*. The stronger students pulled the weaker ones along; the work of the stronger students was refined as a result of their working out their ideas in the group setting. Student essays on *Lolita* were, as a whole, the most insightful and best organized of the semester.

Despite the success of most of these experiences, I suffered doubts about the direction my classes were taking. Although my students were more motivated and seemed to be learning more, I wondered if I was covering what they needed to learn. Almost every time I added a new selection to the syllabus or left the choice to students, some cherished text from the traditional canon had to be discarded. I found that entire periods in literary history were being shortchanged, if not eliminated entirely.

Even when we read a traditional text, I couldn't be sure that the points I thought essential would be made, because I no longer always dominated the classroom agenda through the lecture method. Instead of one "expert" teacher choosing the readings and "pronouncing" upon them, we had a classroom full of instructors grappling with works that were on occasion as new to me as they were to the students. I could shape discussion

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Letters

A NEW FORMAT FOR I.E.?

I am writing this letter at the request of the Los Angeles Community Colleges' English Council representing eight campuses to express our thanks to you for the good work you and your staff do publishing *inside english*.

Because *inside english* is so good, we would like to suggest that if it is possible, you consider redesigning the format into journal size so that it would be easier for its readers to save back copies.

If you like the idea of a journal-size *inside english* and want any outside help with the redesign, we suspect that the services of the Commercial Art Department at Trade Tech might be available, and if you would like our help, we would be happy to make the necessary introductions.

Again, on behalf of the Council, I want to congratulate you on the excellent *inside english*.

MARVIN ZUCKERMAN
Chair, LACCD English Council
Los Angeles Valley College

EDITOR'S NOTE: Readers, what do you think of this proposal? Please indicate your response on a postcard and send it to Barbara Bilson, Editor, *inside english*, English Department, Santa Monica College, Santa Monica, CA 90405.

INDIVIDUAL ECCTYC MEMBERSHIPS

At our last ECCTYC Board meeting in San Francisco, our new president, Lois Powers, spoke to me about serving as a membership chair. During the meetings, the subject of individual memberships came up for discussion, and most of the Board seemed in favor of trying to encourage more of our community college English teachers to directly support their statewide organization, ECCTYC. In the President's Perspective, Lois mentions some very good reasons for this new thrust, and Lynn Fauth's comments [In Other Words, p. 5] also have some strong considerations for us to ponder.

For me, there are two main concerns for our organization's being supported almost entirely by institutional membership fees (reasonably priced, for sure, at $55-$75, depending on the size of the English department) and by money earned from our every-other-year statewide conference. My first and most important concern is that we need to maintain the quality journal that *i.e.* has matured into. Barbara Bilson-Woodruff, with much able help from several assistant editors (nearly all of whom are fulltime English teachers), has done an outstanding job for the last ten years. A few years ago, the Board authorized the "buying" of three hours of Barbara's teaching load from the Santa Monica CC District. However, this reduction from fifteen to twelve teaching units isn't nearly enough reassigned time to do all that she needs to as editor. And, of course, the production and mailing costs of the journal increase yearly, too. With a strong showing of individual membership support, ECCTYC could ensure the continued quality of its journal by providing *i.e.*'s editor with more reassigned time and more paid clerical assistance. I think it's unfair for us as English instructors, knowing full well the time demads of our discipline, to harvest the fruits of a few who put in efforts above and beyond, to supply us with such a good publication. We should be assisting in the production with our financial support.

My other primary concern is that we all

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inside english

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inside english welcomes articles, reviews, letters, and other writings of interest to instructors of English in two-year colleges. Submissions should be limited to no more than ten double-spaced typed pages. Although a detailed *Policy and Style Sheet* is available on request, in general follow *The Chicago Manual of Style*, *The MLA Style Manual*, and *The NCTE Guide for Non-Sexist Language*. The editor reserves the right to edit manuscripts so that their format and language conform to the style established in *inside english*.

Send poems to Robert Rippy, *inside english* Poetry Editor, San Bernardino Valley College, 701 So. Mt. Vernon Avenue, San Bernardino, CA 92403. Send all other submissions to Barbara Bilson Woodruff, *inside english* Editor, Santa Monica College, 1900 Pico Boulevard, Santa Monica, CA 90405. Manuscripts should be accompanied by a cover sheet that includes the author's name, address, and something about the author. Each manuscript should be titled and have the author's name and college under the title. Include a self-addressed stamped envelope.

Subscription rates for departments are $55 to $75 per year (depending on the number of issues required) and $30 dollars per year for commercial subscriptions. Remittance should be made payable to ECCTYC and sent to Richard McIntosh, ECCTYC Treasurer, Cypress College, 9200 Valley View, Cypress, CA 90630. Individual subscriptions include membership in ECCTYC and are $15 per year. Remittance should be made payable to ECCTYC and sent to Bill Decker, ECCTYC Membership Chair, College of the Sequoias, 915 Mooney Blvd., Visalia, CA 93277.

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All of us are well into the Fall 1990 semester or quarter, busy functioning as committed professionals: preparing lectures, leading discussions, reading student papers, serving on committees, making presentations, holding offices in organizations. How can we possibly have time to do anything more—to read the current writers, to reconsider our approaches to teaching, to study the latest in critical theory?

Many of us who attended the ECCTYC-sponsored conference "Revitalizing Literature: Phase II" last April had to face these questions. Dr. Hazard Adams called on us to revitalize our literature courses by expanding our knowledge of current literary theory and reconsidering our reading of any given work of literature. Karin Costello's front-page article details some of Dr. Adams' points. However, Dr. Adams' presentations provoked varying responses from the conference participants, some of which are reflected in the articles by Michelle Pagni and Bernard Goldberg on pages eight and nine. Clearly, the conference revitalized some by stimulating them to study new critics and new texts; it revitalized others by confirming their scholarship and their teaching.

We hope that you will be revitalized by reading in this issue of *inside english* about the literature conference, about Judith Ackley's experience acting in and thinking about *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* (page four), about ways of teaching film and literature (Patrick Kennedy's article on page three), and about how literature can develop our students' social conscience (Kathleen Murphy's article on page eleven).

In addition to these articles, ECCTYC's new president, Lois Powers, provides an overview of ECCTYC's structure and its activities and shows *i.e.*'s readers how they can help the organization continue to be a vital entity in California higher education. Bill Decker in his letter to the editor and Lynn Fauth in his article on page five echo the ECCTYC president's call for English instructors to support ECCTYC, and they remind us that without ECCTYC there would be no *inside english*.

What an exciting, demanding time. As you think about revitalizing your courses and yourselves, think about sharing your struggles and successes with your colleagues who read *i.e.*

BARBARA BILSON WOODRUFF

FROM MOVIES TO THE PAGE

Using Film to Teach Literature

by PATRICK KENNEDY
Golden West College

During the 1990 ECCTYC Conference in Lake Arrowhead on "Revitalizing the Teaching of Literature," seminar speaker Professor Hazard Adams touched on many of the responsibilities and difficulties that we face in teaching the students of the 1990s. Following one of Dr. Adams' lectures, our discussion group of about twenty instructors considered what at first glance appears to be a major obstacle: today's students have little if any literary background. The question then arises: Just what background do our students have that we instructors can tap as a starting point to begin introducing a deep appreciation of literature? The answer is their practiced familiarity with filmed stories. Our younger students did not grow up reading for entertainment. Instead, they grew up watching television and films, and today, in the age of the VCR, film is by far our society's most prevalent artistic medium.

This fact most often is seen as a hindrance to the teaching of literature. An oft-stated complaint of literature instructors is that today's students annually watch hundreds of hours of television and films but seldom read stories. And, of course, this is most often true. Thus, the complaint follows that today's students have little appreciation of fiction, making our jobs as bearers of the literary tradition much more difficult. And yet, this is true only if we instructors passively allow it to be by ignoring our students' interested familiarity with movies and the many valuable and inexpensive film interpretations of literary works. In fact, film can be one of the greatest tools to help students understand and appreciate fiction, and it should be actively employed in any introduction to literature course.

In our ECCTYC discussion group, several instructors testified to varying degrees of success in their systematic use of film in introducing students to fiction. But while this is not a novel concept (no pun intended), most of the instructors in the group had not tried using films (other than filmed productions

of stage plays) as a significant pedagogical tool to teach literature.

Thus, rather than condemning students' leaning toward watching film instead of reading literature, we instructors should use our students' tacit awareness of film conventions and apply it to literature. In other words, we should use their practiced strengths in film appreciation to bolster their unpracticed weakness in literary appreciation. The meshing of these two art forms rewards both student and instructor. This transference of our students' appreciation from the familiar (film) to the unfamiliar (literature) is easily accomplished by employing the rhetorical method of comparison and contrast.

As we all know, film does things that literature cannot, and literature does things that film can only hint at. Generally speaking, film can show and sound out external reality and, thus, *imply* internal thoughts and conflicts in exciting and artistic ways; literature, on the other hand, can more directly probe and reveal internal thoughts and conflicts, using the narrative voice to create new, imaginative perceptions and identifications through metaphoric and figurative language.

This is not to say that such a comparative approach always will lead students to prefer literature. Many fine films are so outstanding that it is easy to enjoy them more than the written story from which they came. When students make this value judgment in a class, they are making an educated choice after having closely compared the literature to the film. Through this comparison and contrast they come to know the conventions and strengths of both art forms much more throughly than if they had studied them separately; the various points of reference betwen the two guide them to closer inspection. Thus, rather than studying literature in a vacuum, without reference to the film art it spawns, this meshing of art forms in the classroom allows students to develop a far greater level of literacy. After using the technique a few times, students are better able to appreciate literature on its own terms.

As Fred H. Marcus notes in his book *Short Story/Short Film*, fiction precedes film, first, because fiction is an older art form and, second, because every film is based on a written story, whether a novel, short story, or screenplay. Referring to a study done in 1965, Marcus points out that the average high school graduate has seen more than fifteen thousand hours of television and over five hundred films. In contrast, such students have spent less than twelve thousand hours in class (Culkin 1). We are, Marcus says, an "image-oriented society" (1). With the recent increased use of VCR's and cable television, this disparity is certainly greater than it was when the study was done. If we turn our backs on film when teaching literature, we ignore a prevalent and closely related art form that performs the very act of literary interpretation we want our students to do.

A fine library of excellent film versions of literature is inexpensive and readily available. An entire literature course on this concept of comparison and contrast can be built around the excellent PBS anthology of the late 1970s and early 1980s: *The American Short Story*. Produced through a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, this series is a compilation of fourteen first-rate film interpretations of American short stories by authors such as Katherine Anne Porter, Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Willa Cather, Ernest Gaines, Sherwood Anderson, Ambrose Bierce, William Faulkner, Kurt Vonnegut, James Thurber, John Updike, Flannery O'Connor, Mark Twain, Richard Wright, and Stephen Crane. These are not literary lightweights. And the directors and actors in these films (which run between forty and sixty minutes each) are outstanding professionals. Using only a couple of fine film versions of short stories in class is time well spent.

The video versions of the films can be purchased from the Illinois University Film Institute for $25 each, and the book edition is a two-volume paperback bargain at $4.95 per book. Each volume can be purchased separately. The books include the stories, excerpts from the screenplays, short but insightful biographies and critical appraisals of each author and his or her work, and numerous interviews with the directors explaining their film interpretation of the literature. (If using one or both of these texts is deemed uneconomical, most literature anthologies also present one or more of the short stories included in the PBS series.) Other fine film versions of excellent literature are available, and personal experience over the past five years has shown that courses advertised as showing film versions of the literature fill with students long before enrollment deadlines. It's a natural because it taps students' appreciation of and familiarity with film while providing an unintimidating, red-carpet welcome to the depths and beauties of literature.

The ease of introducing students to fiction through the use of film is enhanced by the many fundamental similarities between the two art forms. As Marcus notes, film is much more similar to fiction than is drama:

> Unlike the fixed vantage point of a playgoer, the reader and filmgoer have views ranging from panoramic vistas to close-ups of exquisitely detailed particulars. The cameraman can focus on a leaf; the writer can describe its veining. But a playwright must resort to having an actor describe the leaf to the audience. (2)

Furthermore, both film and fiction have complete control over time and space; both can change locales rapidly, and both can offer flashbacks to a past occurrence. As Marcus observes, "Neither filmmaker nor the writer is limited by real space or real time . . . . In 'The Lottery' by Shirley Jackson, a single sentence whisks the reader through changes in space and time without the slightest discomfort:

> The night before the lottery, Mr. Summers and Mr. Graves made up the slips of paper and put them in the box, and it was then taken to the safe of Mr. Summers' coal company and locked up until Mr. Summers was ready to take it to the square next morning." (2)

This sentence, of course, includes three different locations and several different points in time. As Marcus notes, in "cinematic terms, the writer has given us a flashback" (2). While

writers use sentences, filmmakers easily provide flashbacks through cuts or dissolves to other images and settings.

Although most students have viewed hundreds of films, some instruction in fundamental film techniques is necessary to bring their tacit knowledge of film conventions to the surface. They should be made aware of and encouraged to think about how filmmakers use the various techniques of cuts, dissolves, lighting, camera angle, montage, cues for flashbacks, flashforwards, or dream sequences, selective focusing on significant symbols or recurring motifs, use of slow motion to achieve poetic tone or other effects, cinematic allusion, and the importance of music and sound effects. Similarly, these students should, of course, be taught fundamental elements of literature such as symbol, setting, metaphor, analogy, tone, literary allusion, conflicts, characterizations, and narrative points of view. Genres such as realism, romanticism, fantasy, and science fiction are common to both art forms, though achieved differently as each medium uses its respective strengths: images and sound for film, words and figurative langauge for fiction.

While film certainly provides precise images (especially important when involving unfamiliar settings such as historical occurrences or foreign cultures), prose can provide greater insights into the universal inner world of human conflicts and motivations. Film, most often, can only imply the complexity of a character's psychological state through facial expressions, actions, dialogue, music and other sound effects, or explicitly through narrative voice-overs, which, however, become obtrusive unless used economically. On the other hand, students usually discover that prose provides more precise background and understanding of characters' psychological states through narrative inspection of the

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CORRECTIONS

The May 1990 issue of *inside english* contained two serious errors. The first was the misspelling of poet Ron Koertge's name (page 5); inadvertently an "a" was inserted. Mr. Koertge graciously accepted our apology, writing, "Don't worrie about the poeme. Those thangs hoppen."

The second unfortunate mistake was the misprinting of six lines of Margaret Gerard's fine poem "For J., on His Thirteenth Birthday" (page 11). As Ms. Gerard wrote, "It does seem so vital, somehow, to a poem that every word be chosen with great care." Please turn to page 13 to read the carefully chosen *correct* version.

TEACHING AND ACTING *ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN ARE DEAD*

Roles and Responsibility and Life on the Margins

by JUDITH ACKLEY
Orange Coast College

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, a play about disorientation and lack of identity, has as its prevailing theme the concept that we are all actors on the world's stage. Tom Stoppard has set up a dialogue between his text and Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, and with its emphasis on the importance of words, language, and symbols, structuralist criticism is a definite influence. Literary works involve a relationship between writer and reader, between writer and text, or between text and text. Dramatic literature, however, differs from fiction or most poetry in one significant way: it is meant to be performed. To the interaction between writer and reader must be added the elements of the actors and the audience, adding sound and motion and giving the reader or audience the chance to immediately enter a text. I had a unique opportunity to participate directly in Stoppard's perception of life during a workshop production of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* on 5 April 1990 at the Lake Arrowhead Conference center as part of the "Revitalizing the Teaching of Literature in California Community Colleges" conference sponsored by the English Council of California Two-Year Colleges. As did Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, I found myself, cast as Queen Gertrude, entering an untested reality where the words and actions took on a new relationship, speaking lines and performing actions that were a part of a present reality, and altering my perception of the work.

Professional actors played the three roles of Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, and The Player, with The Player directing the show as well as acting; thus, he not only controlled the action dramatically, as Stoppard wrote him, but also physically, as he introduced a group of English professors to swords, crowns, the mysteries of upstage and downstage, and the

necessity for keeping one's wits about one. As Gertrude, I experienced the queen's duality firsthand as I was pulled between the various characters I met as queen and the tension of being a player in another drama and being an English teacher playing the role of an actor playing a queen. Thus, the dramatic disorientation envisioned by Stoppard became real as I entered the text verbally, physically, and emotionally.

Modern criticism asks whether and how texts can carry on a dialogue with each other and whether a later text can influence the meaning of an earlier one. In *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, Stoppard works within the context of *Hamlet*, but adds his own linguistic and symbolic meanings to it. After experiencing *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, *Hamlet* cannot be viewed exactly as before.

Tom Stoppard has chosen to work within Shakespeare's text and within a specific cultural framework. Literary works function within a cultural context as we bring to them our own assumptions about the culture, with each text relating in some way to its culture and its readers. Stoppard assumes that *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* will be performed for an audience composed of people familiar with dramatic tradition, people who at least have heard of *Hamlet*, people familiar with at least the bare bones of Shakespeare's drama. An unaware audience would be as at sea as Rosencrantz and Guildenstern themselves, and Stoppard assumes this level of sophistication so that he can conduct the dialogue between his text and Shakespeare's.

First performed in 1966, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* has as its background the chaos theory in science and the critical theories of new criticism and structuralism; in line with his important theme of marginality, Stoppard shifts the focus of the original indecision and equivocation of Hamlet to other characters to tell another story of uncertainty and intellectual malaise. Because of this shift, Stoppard forces us to read on the margin of *Hamlet*. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, traditionally played as comic dolts and sycophants in *Hamlet*, decenter the play momentarily each time they appear. But in Stoppard's work, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern become modern characters in Elizabethan dress, characters whose conflict about roles seems much like our own.

Reversible, mutable, and interchangeable roles are an important theme in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, since "practically every exit in *Hamlet* is an entrance in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*. Within such a concept based on reversals, it is logically coherent that minor characters should become the new protagonists and that Shakespeare's enigmatic hero shoud be reduced to a figure in the background . . . " (Droudt 357).

The title of the play reveals that the destiny of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern has been predetermined. The main characters are not dying or moving toward death—they *are* dead; thus the title foreshadows what is to come. Given that they are dead, we as readers and as spectators can constantly question exactly what they can do and what we as an audience expect them to do. The title signals the characters' state of non-being, causing us to ponder our own actions as humans in the face of certain mortality. Thus, the plight of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern parallels our own.

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead begins with the images of the coins and gaming. The coin itself creates a paradox; the inseparable two sides of a coin belong to each other, yet remain opposed (Droudt 349). After the coin has come up heads eighty-five times, both partners seem to feel that those coincidences cannot be entirely random, although both acknowledge that, with a coin flip, a coin has a fifty-fifty chance of coming up either way each time.

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern return to the coin-flip game throughout the play whenever they need to relax and regroup. The coin flip is important to them, seeming to imply some kind of order in the universe, an order that they have every reason to question. But Guildenstern especially continues to have faith that somehow the laws of justice, or of probability, or something, will take effect and the universe will right itself. "In refusing to accept the possibility that no universal sign exists, Guildenstern is simultaneously refusing to accept personal control over his actions and behavior" (Lenoff 49).

Guildenstern valiantly attempts to come up with some rational explanation to explain the phenomenon of the coin always coming up heads. The indisputable fact makes him anxious, and in moments of anxiety we often choose to drive things backward to find origins to help explain. Guildenstern's four explanations are worth noting because they come up repeatedly throughout the play and in our lives.

> **Guil:** . . . I'm willing it. Inside where nothing shows, I am the essence of a man spinning double-headed coins, and betting against himself in a private atonement for an unremembered past.

Thus, Guildenstern proposes taking upon himself responsibility for his decisions even though those determinations might be unconscious. He posits that there exists a rational explanation for the coin coming up heads, that he is willing it in some way, even though he is unaware of willing it, because he cannot remember why he would do such a thing. But since this justification does not allay him, he goes on.

> **Guil:** . . . Time has stopped dead, and the single experience of one coin being flipped has been repeated ninety times . . .

But this explanation doesn't satisfy him because it seems beyond the realm of possibility.

> **Guil:** . . . divine intervention, that is to say, a good turn from above . . .

As a modern, Guildenstern cannot accept a divine solution, but he proposes it in the interest of considering all sides of a question before coming to a conclusion.

> **Guil:** . . . a spectacular vindication of the principle that each individual coin spun individually *(he spins one)* is as likely to come down heads as tails and therefore should cause no surprise each individual time it does. *(It does. He tosses it to Ros.)* (16)

Since Guildenstern's fourth possibility bothers him most of all, he drops the discussion.

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern find the prospect of a chaotic universe so troubling that they are forced to search for meaning in the margins of words, their meanings, and the gap between word and meaning. Language must have meaning that will allow them not to depend on chaotic forces. They explore the possibility of relying on language and words, since language seems concrete. In discussing their service to the king in Act I, they recall that Gertrude has promised them that "Your visitation shall receive such thanks/ As fits a king's remembrance" (36). Rosencrantz and Guildenstern ponder the meaning of what they are to do and what reward they will get;

> **Ros:** And then we can go?
> **Guil:** And receive such thanks as fits a king's remembrance.
> **Ros:** I like the sound of that. What do you think he means by remembrance?
> **Guil:** He doesn't forget his friends.
> **Ros:** Would you care to estimate?
> **Guil:** Difficult to say, really—some kings tend to be amnesiac, others I suppose—the opposite, whatever that is . . . (40-41)

In this dialogue, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern conveniently overlook that the promise of a king's remembrance came not from Claudius himself but from Gertrude. Thus the technical syllogistic reasoning that follows is based on an erroneous supposition that Gertrude speaks for the king. Even the audience may not recall that it was Gertrude who spoke the words; however, I, with my altered perspective, remember very well who uttered the lines. Guildenstern continues pondering just what the opposite of *amnesiac* is and comes up with the word *retentive*:

> **Guil:** *Retentive*—he's a very retentive king, a loyal retainer . . .
> **Ros:** What are you playing at?
> **Guil:** Words, words. They're all we have to go on. (41)

Guildenstern desperately wants to rely on something in the irrational world in which they find themselves. But because the sign, by its very nature, is arbitrary, language cannot "defend itself against the forces which from one moment to the next are shifting the relationship between the signified and the signifier" (de Saussure 11). The pause after the above dialogue about words and signs is broken by Rosencrantz who asks if they shouldn't be doing something constructive, but neither character can come up with any

(Continued on Page 8)

IN OTHER WORDS . . .

. . . Let's Get Our Act Together

by LYNN FAUTH
Oxnard College

When was the last time an English teacher was consulted by legislators about the teaching of English? Usually they call upon some teacher of education from a UC campus to tell them what we do in our classes. Do they know what we need? But politicians sure know whom to blame if student literacy is not up to what they believe to be par!

As a former member of another state's intersegmental board—a committee that defined standards dictating what was college-level-credit-worthy in an English class and what was not—because I was a member of that state's council of teachers of English, I was surprised, upon joining a California community college English faculty, that there was no similar advise and consent role for California's community college English teachers. It's time that we in California start behaving professionally and lobby our legislators and the legislature to ensure that our professional needs are heard. Other professional groups—the AMA, the NLN, and others from acupuncturists to Zoyzia grass growers—lobby the legislature through their professional organizations. Where are we?

Would you like your English 101/1A course capped at twenty students? Would you like your remedial classes limited to fifteen students? How about a maximum 1A/101 student load of sixty (three sections) and the maximum load of developmental students of forty-five (three sections)? Could you live with those numbers? Could you do a better job of retention and instruction?

Why does the University of California limit its Subject A courses to around seventeen to twenty-two students, when we have remedial courses in some community colleges as large as forty-five?

Obviously, you know the answer, but I'll repeat it: the politics of appropriation. And, professional respect.

Would you like more professional respect, respect like that accorded the National League of Nurses who exercise near-dictatorial powers over nursing curricula and nursing class staffing? It's a respect that leads to professional clout which would assure us that English teachers will be heard regarding our professional judgment about reasonable and appropriate teaching loads and class sizes. Why can't we English teachers be like the National League of Nurses and dictate class sizes and number of students per faculty member?

The cynics among us will say, "The war is lost. We're stuck in the composition trenches," and go on and collect their paychecks. Do you want to be like them? If you're reading this article, the probable answer is no. After all, you're professional enough to read *inside english*, the only publication dedicated to teaching English in California's two-year colleges. Granted, there are other journals, but when was the last time you saw an article addressing our state's unique needs and by a California community college English faculty member in the pages of *Teaching English in the Two Year College*? You care about your profession. It's time to do something about it.

Here's the catch. Have you ever considered joining the English Council of California Two Year Colleges (ECCTYC)? Of course, many will say, "Why should I? My department already has a membership!" True, it does—otherwise you wouldn't be reading this and for free! However, isn't it time we got as professional as English teachers in other states?

So then you may ask, "What do I get for my dues dollars besides feeling good and professional about myself, and a possible tax break?"

First, with increased revenues, *inside english* will be able to increase its size and publishing frequency; do you have an idea for an article or a manuscript gathering dust? A larger *i.e.* just might have room for what you have to offer.

And second, and perhaps more important, increased memberships in ECCTYC will signal to the legislature, the Board of Governors, local boards, and campus administrators that English teachers are getting their act together; we're tired of being treated the same as the teachers in other fields, who give fifteen hours of lectures, Scantron-scored examinations, and disappear, leaving us to read our students' papers and to suffer the blame for their students' poor writing, when and if they get around to assigning a paper.

An enlarged ECCTYC membership will give us some political clout and might get us treated in accord with the special demands of teaching literacy to an increasingly heterogeneous clientele. AB 1725 gave us the legal authority to share governance; if governance is shared, then our professional needs should be heard. ECCTYC membership can give English teachers a professional voice to lobby loud and clear about our specific and special professional needs.

Join ECCTYC and see it expand. See ECCTYC expand and our political clout increase.

Here's to a more professional future.

EDITOR'S NOTE: For another comment on this issue see *Letters*, page 2 and *President's Perspective*, page 7.

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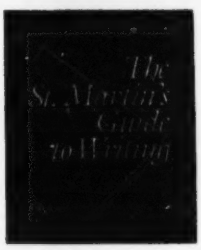

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AN INTRODUCTION TO COWARDICE

by CHARLES HOOD
Antelope Valley College

Like most of us, when I get a potential new textbook, I start by moseying around the pages rather aimlessly, just to get a feel for the thing. As I flipped through the seventh edition of this well-known collection, at first I was struck by the cozy fit of the passages. Frost, Dickinson, Shelley, Thmas Gray: they're all here, all the good white poets, all as familiar and well-worn as the presidents on my loose change. But then I began to have doubts. As with earlier editions, there is nothing in this that a Texas school board would ban, nothing in it that will make you feel dumb or be amazed or

even blink with surprise, and maybe that's not so good. When I think about the polychrome array of poetry in the real world and then when I compare it to the timidly selected contents of Kennedy's book, I end up shaking my head. The gulf is just so damn *large*. Maybe to be safe isn't a virtue; maybe, with this, it is time to open the shutters, turn up the music, let the drunk uncles out of the closet. Maybe it's time to admit to students that there is more to poetry than lists of words such as *synecdoche* or *sestina*, that there are poems out there written by folks who eat their peas off their knives and wash their supper down with tequila from the bottle. Maybe, in short, it is time to tell the truth.

It's not that there isn't a kind of truth to this, because there is. When he explains, on a general level, some differences between good and bad poetry, he is on the money, as he is in juxtaposing a sample from Whitman against a King James psalm, thus swiftly demonstrating Whitman's prosody. Yet Kennedy also indulges in curious falsehoods. In defining accentual-syllabic versus free verse, for instance, he says "the poet who writes in open forms usually seeks no final click. Often , such a poet views the writing of the poem as a process, rather than a quest for an absolute." What kind of bullpucky is this? *Of course* open form poets can want closure, of course they care about the end effect, every bit as much as the spinner of madrigals and villanelles. If anything, the "final click" probably takes even more work to achieve in free verse. He also is plain wrong in predicting the resurgence of neoformalism in poetry; an East Coast cadre, true, practices it, but many more poets currently are exploring other directions, as a look at the quarterlies *Temblor, Conjunctions*, or *Sulfur* will prove.

None of his huffing and puffing can make these alternate voices disappear. Actually his entire perspective is a type of lie, as it implies that poetry was (and is) only created in England, with small artist colonies in America, Ireland, France, and Japan. Does he think this is what English teachers want to hear? I can't believe he has not made even passing reference to the sterling translations of Native American poetry (to pick just one cultural group) done by Jerome Rothenberg, Dennis Tedlock, and Howard Norman. No Third World work (old or new) makes it in. Why the blinders? What is he afraid of? Maybe this: hard work. If he were to let slip that poetry also includes Africa, he would have to scrap the structure of much of this book.

Let me explain. Basically, this book falls into four sections. First comes a lecture section of sixteen chapters on "song," "imagery," "myth," and so on. Next is an anthology section of 146 poems alphabetically by author, followed by a biography section—poets included in this are denoted by an asterisk whenever their work appears. Finally there is a how-to section on creating original poetry as well as writing standard undergraduate papers on literature. The advice sounds ho-hum but workable, covering journals and index cards and MLA documentation; it could be used with little change no matter what preceded it.

Were his canon enlarged the most significant renovation would need to come in the opening parts, where his version of the study of poetry binds itself to the standard European conventions of irony, brevity, and rhetorical devices. These apply to some poems but hardly all. There are many other facets to consider, such as repetition or syntactical disintegration. You may think me gone round the bend for suggesting that Zuni poetry or Gertrude Stein counts as much as Shakespeare. But even if we ignore ethnopoetics and stay strictly with material in English, Kennedy bypasses the Beats (he includes one atypical poem by Ginsberg only), the Objectivists (two by Lorine Niedecker only, and she was peripheral in any case), the New York school (two only, not great, by Ashbery), the Black Mountain poets (unless you count Levertov, there is only one atypical Olson and one Creeley), and the Language Poets (nil representation). In the last case, you may personally not like what the Language Poets do, but to skip them is the same as to write a history of literary criticism that does not ever mention post-structuralism. Language Poets are producing a canon of their own, and it has nothing to do with heroic couplets.

His failure to accommodate work from radically different traditions is not very surprising since most editors stay close to European models. Yet even foundation texts of Modernism are ignored. Keats, in a letter, once said a long poem is a test of invention, "which I take to be the Polar star of Poetry." This book does little then with invention, since Kennedy shies clear of long poems. Although "epic" is used as a frequent category in the biographies, there is no direct discussion of book-length poems. Classical epic poets are easy to name—Homer, Dante, Milton—but fine as they are, I am thinking more particularly about the developments of this century. What about Eliot's *Four Quartets* or Williams' *Paterson*? Should we read them or Blake's *The Book of Thel* the same way we do a sonnet or an epigram? In the "forms chapter" he describes limericks. Hell, my students can read a limerick. What they don't know how to do is cope with a text they don't "get" on the first strafing run. Since long poems do exist, and since they are different from shorter works, Kennedy needs to add a chapter (or more) approaching them. What do you do with something like Zukofsky's *A*, Olson's *Maximus Poems*, Ashbery's *Three Poems*, Dennis Phillips' *The Frontier*, or Ron Silliman's "Sunset Debris"? For these we need techniques that can shed light on collaged perspective, narrative accumulation, deflected thesis, spatial emphasis, or dense allusion. The book avoids these problems entirely. For example, Kennedy says Ezra Pound is a "great" and "splendid poet," so why then does he not include any of Pound's major work? Only three poems with Pound's name on them are in this five hundred-page book. The first is the inevitable metro station haiku and the other two are translations. *The Cantos*, which sit off our literary coastline like some unsinkable wreck, get no attention. When I think about how much is avoided by this book, I want to retitle it "an introduction to easily taught (and more easily defended) poetry."

Other complaints? Like many textbooks, this seems to have been the labor of nobody's love. Although poetry itself belies such carelessness, this book has typos, the index is incomplete, some authors receive asterisks yet have no biographical essays while others

go unasterisked who do. At the back is a facsimile student paper which was supposed to have (I gather from following comments) mock-hand-drawn corrections; it doesn't, and so Kennedy's analysis praises proofing changes that are not there. Are the editors this careless with their own love letters and checking accounts, or is this a sloppy job because it is "just" another textbook revision? I think it is an insult this wasn't more professionally handled.

So, where does that leave us? It leaves me waiting for a different and better book, and I am beginning to wonder which will arrive first, it or Godot. All I want is an anthology which can include bad boys like Robert Peters or Charles Bukowski while still covering high brows like Yeats. Maybe I should take out an ad in the personals: "Generous college professor seeks English book with spunk. Emotions preferred, tranquility optional." As for Kennedy, if Augustine is right and poetry is the Devil's wine, then this seventh edition is a Shirley Temple. *Caveat emptor.*

□ Kennedy, X. J. *An Introduction to Poetry.* 7th ed. Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman, 1990.

A CHICANO PERSPECTIVE

by BILL DECKER
College of the Sequoias

"Not another book on Viet Nam," I hear some of the readers groan, and they probably quit reading this review. But I think this book warrants wide distribution and reading for two reasons: one, it's a different perspective, in many ways. Charley Trujillo, who served in Viet Nam as an infantry sergeant and now teaches in the Intercultural/International Division at DeAnza College, has put together a collection of interviews with Chicano veterans of Viet Nam to serve "as a corrective reminder to many white North Americans who are, for the most part, kept in a tragic state of unawareness as to how many Chicanos fought in the [Viet Nam] war, especially considering the almost total absence of Chicano soldiers in films, newspaper stories, television programs and even war footage" (111); "Chicanos were often the easiest and most malleable resource the U.S. had for achieving its quotas for combat soldiers. And to those ends they were used generously" (1).

And secondly, I think we—particularly we who teach many in our college classrooms who have not read nor heard much about Viet Nam—need to keep reminding them and ourselves of that war and its deep and lasting influences on our society. As Owen Meany's 1961 prediction in John Irving's *A Prayer for Owen Meany* states, "WE HAVE A GENERATION OF PEOPLE WHO ARE *ANGRY* TO LOOK FORWARD TO, . . . AND MAYBE *TWO* GENERATIONS OF PEOPLE WHO DON'T GIVE A SHIT . . . " (323). That idea comes up again and again in *Soldados*; as the war ground on for nearly ten years and as soldiers returned to "the world," they just didn't care about anything. If we as instructors in the humanities are to help a new generation grow past that attitude to one of more care and concern for each other, for our culture, and for our environment, the Viet Nam war and its effects must be part of our open and honest discussion.

Some of the themes, of course, will be familiar to us who lived through and remember those years—the changes in

(Continued on Page 15)

PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

ECCTYC Looks Forward to the 90s

ECCTYC begins the fall of 1990 with an almost completely new Executive Board and five new Regional Directors. I will be serving as President the next two years; Bob Dees, Orange Coast College, as First Vice-President; Linda Wark, Sacramento City College, as Second Vice-President; Dick McIntosh, Cypress College (our single, but dependable, incumbent) as Treasurer; Gordon Taylor, Yuba College, as Secretary; and Jim Cagnacci, City College of San Francisco, as Immediate Past President. Our new directors are Rich Edmunds, Yuba College, Region I; Jo Ford, Mission College, Region III; Denise Spisak, Consumnes River, Region IV; Helen Gordon, Bakersfield College, Region V; and Tom Lew, El Camino College, Region VIII. "Old" and "new," we will endeavor to represent the interests of California community college English teachers wherever and whenever those interests need to be articulated.

Welcoming new officers and directors means saying goodbye to others. With thanks and appreciation, we say goodbye to Paul Kaser, Region V; Nick Roberts, Region III; Lloyd Thomas, First Vice-President; Shirley Sykes, Secretary; and John Gill, Immediate Past President. Jim Cagnacci, our President of the '80s, remains as Immediate Past President. Following Jim will not be easy, for he has set a high standard and provided a fine model for leadership — and he *is* still on the board!

Many of you are familiar with the "hard to remember what it stands for" acronym (ECCTYC), but don't know how the organization is structured and how it functions. Most English teachers in the state are familiar with *inside english*, but they have little idea how it mysteriously appears in their mailboxes.

I think that it is important that more English teachers understand how the organization is structured and how it functions, so that we can have your support and participation as we reepresent your interests. The Board of Directors is comprised of an Executive Committee, nominated and elected by the Board, and two regional directors from each of the ten regions of the state elected by chairs and/or teachers from the colleges in the region. The list of officers and regional directors will be printed as part of the masthead on page 2. The map on page 9 shows how the districts are formed geographically in the state, and the accompanying list cites the colleges in each district.

The English Council of the California Two-Year Colleges represents and serves teachers and chairs in a number of significant ways:

1) ECCTYC promotes excellence in teaching by
   - publishing *inside english*, a journal for California community college instructors
   - sponsoring biennial conferences alternating between south and north locations
   - conducting south and north meetings of English chairs
   - conducting regional meetings
   - sponsoring literature conferences at Lake Arrowhead
   - publishing, soon, a newsletter for Chairs, *Chairspeak*
2) ECCTYC represents the interests of English teachers throughout the state by
   - preparing workload studies
   - advocating for community college interests in UC, CSU, and with legislators
3) ECCTYC has appointees to the state committees on
   - Basic Skills Assessment
   - California Writing Project
   - Intersegmental Coordinating Committee (ICC) English Assessment Committee
   - Basic Skills — Academic Senate
4) ECCTYC sends representatives to
   - the CSU and UC English Councils
   - the CSU Composition Committee
   - CSU Literary Committees
5) ECCTYC has developed liaisons to better represent community college interests with
   - the State Chancellor's Office
   - the Academic Senate
   - the State Department of Education
   - the State Legislature
   - California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC)
   - organizations such as CATESOL/TESOL, MLA, CATE, NCTE, CCCC
   - California Academic Partnership Program (CAPP)

Many of us in ECCTYC have come to realize that the organization needs more direct connections with English teachers and chairs. Believing that we need a strong voice to meet the challenge of the '90s, we want to promote activities that encourage those closer connections with more teachers and chairs.

At the CCCC's conference at Seattle in 1989, Andrea Lunsford delivered a memorable address, "Composing Ourselves: Politics, Commitment, and the Teaching of Writing" (*College Composition and Communication*, February 1990), that made a significant point, and one that I think we, as English teachers in an era of change and challenge, need to remember almost daily as we endeavor to carry out our prrofessional responsibilities. She suggested that we, as teachers of writing, need to concentrate on "composing ourselves." The connotations are rich, but the denotation is crucial. As community college teachers of English, we are handmaidens of many: English teachers are expected to teach courses that serve other disciplines; English teachers are responsible for literacy; English teachers are expected to teach writing for every occasion; English teachers are to blame when students can't write in other classes or on the job; English teachers should be seen but not heard in college policy, matriculation policy, workload issues, etc. We are "composed" by legislators, matriculation laws, our own—often radically diverse—college policies, by four-year institutions, and by the Academic Senate. Often we are so busy being so many things to so many that we lose touch with what we are as professionals, with what led us to the teaching of English in the first place—our love of language and literature and our desire to share it with others.

As the state moves to address problems of literacy, transfer, minority education, matriculation, budget, etc., we sometimes find ourselves bombarded by three new "Rs"—regulations, requirements, and restrictions. The challenge will be to circumvent the three "Rs" with the three "Cs"—creativity, community, and "composing ourselves." ECCTYC would like to support California community college instructors as they respond creatively to the challenges of the '90s, to help develop a stronger community of two-year English teachers in the state to address those challenges, and finally, to build a state organization of professionals who are engaged in the dynamic process of "composing themselves" as they respond to changes and challenges rather than allow themselves to be "composed" by others who narrow their scope and restrict their perspectives.

With that in mind, we realize that we need to strengthen our organization conceptually and financially. We would like to see more teachers and chairs actively involved in ECCTYC by attending regional meetings and conferences and by writing articles and letters for *inside english*. Dialogue and exchange is essential. Knowing your ideas and concerns, ECCTYC can speak more effectively for you at state levels—in the Chancellor's Office, with legislators, and among the other segments of higher education. A statewide community of voices will have more strength than a single voice on an individual campus.

In order to achieve such an ambitious goal, we realize that as an organization we also need to address financial issues. We have relied primarily on conference income and institutional memberships to cover the cost of *inside english*, our major expense. We have sent *inside english* to colleges whether or not they paid the institutional membership because we wanted to reach all community college instructors. Increased printing and mailing costs may make that impossible.

But even if every college paid for an institutional membership, the cost of publishing and mailing *inside english* exceeds the income. Thus, we are planning to offer individual memberships for two reasons: (1) to encourage more active participation in order to represent you better and (2) to improve our financial base. Even though you would continue to receive your copy of *inside english* through your institution, we are asking your support through individual memberships as well. Though you could argue that you already get *inside english* without being an individual member, I hope that you will make an individual commitment to acknowledge the services of ECCTYC on your behalf and to ensure continued publication of *inside english*.

The most compelling issue for ECCTYC is to meet the challenges of the '90s—literacy, minority education, basic skills, preparing students for the 2000s, hiring practices, shortage of qualified teachers, teacher education and graduate programs, workload and class size issues, articulation with four-year colleges, matriculation requirements, and pedagogy to meet diverse needs—and to have a strong voice when we address them, a voice composed of individual members who are dynamically involved in the process of "composing themselves."

The expertise in our field is impressive. ECCTYC needs to draw on your resources as we respond to the challenges that face us—and it is important that we not compromise our unique identity in the process. Let us be about the business of "composing ourselves" in terms of the richness of our profession.

LOIS POWERS
Fullerton College

inside english DEADLINES

Manuscripts received after the deadline for a given issue will be considered for the next appropriate issue.

DECEMBER 1990 issue
Teaching English as a Subversive Act
15 October 1990

MARCH 1991 issue
Writing at All Levels
15 January 1991

MAY 1991 issue
The English Classroom of the 90s
15 March 1991

AT THE ECCTYC LIT CONFERENCE

Focusing on the Wrong Side of the Issues

by MICHELLE PAGNI
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As a recent newcomer to the California Community College system, I was excited to read about the seminar that ECCTYC was offering in revitalizing the teaching of literature. I eagerly anticipated the chance to re-immerse myself in the classroom in a role-reversal, where I again would sit as student, to listen and to imbibe the views that Dr. Hazard Adams would express. As important, I hoped I would have the chance to rub elbows with those who knew the ropes, those who had been teaching at the community college level for years. I viewed the seminar as a learning experience on two planes: Hazard Adams' talks would allow me to become acquainted again with critical theory—which I seldom have time to peruse amidst the stacks and stacks of papers to grade—and the group discussions would allow me to learn some practical ideas from those who had more experience than I.

Unfortunately, many who attended the conference only expected the latter; they came to Arrowhead with a more narrow focus, taking the seminar at face—or rather, title—value. They came to revitalize their teaching and expected to receive practical instruction. These people missed the purpose of the seminar—not merely to give us new ideas, but to awaken our brain cells—that is, to revitalize not just our teaching skills and ideas but our own minds, to get us excited again about the basis of our classes and our own college educations—literature.

I was disheartened to hear quite a few participants grumbling about the format of

the seminar, wondering how Hazard Adams' discussions of critical theory—particularly deconstruction—could be applied to the community college classroom. People who only noticed the "gap" in Adams' talks, however, missed the point of the seminar. The revitalization of teaching cannot take place without rethinking, without the instructors pumping some fresh blood—some new ideas—into their system. This does not mean we can improve our instruction only by learning new methods to apply in the classroom; we also have to keep the ideas in our minds fresh, keep them jumping around. Adams' talks were designed to do just this: to expose us to some of the ideas that current graduate students are learning, to keep us and our ways of seeing texts from becoming stagnant.

In addition, Adams' insistence on the necessity of scholarship was faulted by many participants who felt scholarship had less—if any—value in the community college system. They complained about their excessive teaching loads and the lack of time to do research; they faulted Adams for his unrealistic expectations of them. Again, these people were blinded by their own grievances. Adams was not pointing any fingers or making any judgments; rather he was merely espousing the university doctrine of scholarship. We must remember that Adams has chosen to work in the four-year university system, partly, I am sure, because he enjoys the scholarship that is required in order to progress through the ranks. Certainly, we are not expected to do the same kind of in-depth scholarship that four-year school professors do; we have a heavier teaching load and, therefore, substantially less time to do research. But we are still obligated as teachers to be prepared, to be informed of the basic ideas underlying any text and of general movements in literary scholarship—and that is the point I see that Adams was making. Indeed, none of us would enter a class without having done some preliminary work on whatever it is we'll be teaching, even if that only entails reading an instructor's manual. So we are all, in a way, "guilty" of doing scholarship.

However, our scholarship should not end there. We are not responsibly meeting the needs of our students if we do not keep up with changes in our field. We should not continue to use the same edition of the same text that we used in 1970. We should know the issues of writing across the curriculum, even if we do not choose to practice them. We should know the issues of the changing canon, and we should no longer be teaching an all-white, predominantly-male anthology. We cannot live in an academic vacuum. So we must, in this way, do scholarship—if only to keep up with the changes in the fields of composition and literature. We are not expected to be experts on every single author in every single text we teach. But we cannot be ignorant of the basics. That is what the seminar—and the seminars like this one—are reminding us: we are part of a discipline that grows and changes, so we cannot let our minds or our teaching become inert. Nor should we become so practical minded that we cannot see the forest for the trees.

The ECCTYC seminar was intended to give us two kinds of instruction: practical--from the discussion groups and general sharing of ideas that occurs in informal conversation—and scholastic—and that is where Hazard Adams came in. The organizers of the seminar made a decision to bring a scholar to speak to us, as they had with Robert Scholes in 1988; if they did not consciously explore new topics, we would have to attend only once to get the information. Adams' talks were not necessarily meant to be used *per se* in the classroom. (James Joyce's *Finnegan's Wake* is tough enough for most community college students without also trying to teach them deconstruction and to have them deconstruct the text down to the very last allusion.) But we can explain that another way to read a text *is* to break it down, or we can let them know that there is some Irish history behind Joyce's *Dubliners*, even if we do not explain it all or even know it ourselves.

As community college instructors, we have made a choice—either consciously or for practical reasons—to emphasize teaching over scholarship. But we cannot let ourselves get so jaded and overloaded with work that we lose our fire for learning. We cannot inspire if we are not inspired ourselves. It is that inspiration, that excitement, that drives us to learn more about texts, that drives us to scholarship, whether formal or not.

My experience at the ECCTYC seminar was educational—both pedagogically from Adams' talks and experientially from the reactions of other participants. I was disappointed that some had become so narrow in their thinking that they could not see the seminar for what it was: a chance to learn, to think, to share. Perhaps it is the newness of it all that intrigued me. But of those at Lake Arrowhead, perhaps I should have found it the most "known" since I only recently completed graduate school and, therefore, have not been out of the classroom for long. But to be instructors, we have to love the classroom—no matter what side of the desk we're on. And every time we put ourselves back into the students' position, we gain from the experience.

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TEACHING AND ACTING

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concrete proposal except to continue word analysis and word games.

Tom Stoppard will not allow audience and actor either complacency or abdication of responsibility. By choosing to enter into a dialogue with another text, he emphasizes his theme of the fate of the unaware observer of life. As spectators we must interact with the words and characters, free to follow the searchings of Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, The Player, ourselves and our own thoughts within the confined space of the script. The experience of playing Queen Gertrude, of being an actor on the margin of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, demonstrated to me that a text entered through the periphery, or in an unusual way, may alter one's perspective on and appreciation of a text. In describing theatre, Shakespeare wrote of a "Wooden O" that could contain the universe. As humans, although fated to die, we cannot remain on the fringes; we may observe from the fringes, but finally we must enter the drama directly as participants.

As teachers, we daily enter a drama not only with our students but also with the multitude of personalities that make up a college campus. And, as with Stoppard's Player, our teaching role gives us great responsibility for the action that takes place in the confined space of our classrooms. We can assist in creating the tension and disorientation that are integral parts of critical thinking, of entering texts from the complexity of roles we fill. We need to enable students to work with texts as participants, not merely as idle observers.

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In Defense of Theory: An Exploration of Fear and Defensiveness

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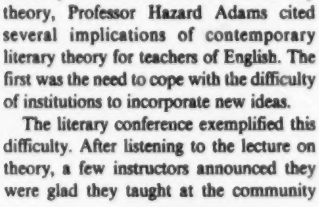
America has a history of privileging the practical over art and the intellect. Thomas Jefferson, in a 14 March 1818 letter to Nathaniel Burwell, warned of the dangers awaiting those who read fiction:

> A great obstacle to good education is the inordinate passion prevalent for novels, and the time lost in that reading which should be instructively employed. When this poison infects the mind, it destroys its tone and revolts it against wholesome reading. Reason and fact, plain and unadorned, are rejected. Nothing can engage attention unless dressed in all the figments of fancy, and nothing so bedecked comes amiss. The result is a bloated imagination, sickly judgment, and disgust towards all *the real businesses of life* [italics my own]. (*Bedford Introdution to Literature* 470)

In recent times, we may view the attacks on the National Endowment for the Arts as an indication of how little we value art. In the 4 March 1990 edition of the *Los Angeles Times*, the heading in column one read "Intellect Is Out in U.S. Politics," opposite a photo of President Bush. We are a practical people suspicious of new ideas. It is not so surprising, then, that we in the community colleges who consider ourselves interested in ideas might react against those ideas with which we are not familiar. Perhaps this explains the defensive grumblings of "So what?" in response to the presentations on literary theory presented at the recent ECCTYC Seminar "Revitalizing the Teaching of Literature at the Community Colleges: Phase II."

Near the end of the first evening's carefully delineated overview of literary theory, Professor Hazard Adams cited several implications of contemporary literary theory for teachers of English. The first was the need to cope with the difficulty of institutions to incorporate new ideas.

The literary conference exemplified this difficulty. After listening to the lecture on theory, a few instructors announced they were glad they taught at the community



college level, which described for them a practical training ground for whatever path in life the student wishes to travel, whether it be dental hygienist, auto mechanic, or student at a university, where the strange and impractical ideas lie. In our discussion group, explorations of theory strayed quickly to the sharing of favorite teaching techniques. It is easier to confirm the familiar than to venture into new territory.

A few people declared they found the group discussion more useful than the lecture. A pattern began to emerge: the lecture had presented new ideas and was therefore frightening. The group, which approached the ideas of the lecture and then retreated to what we do in the classroom, was familiar and therefore comforting. This is how our students must feel. But our students are sometimes braver than we are and question our methods in an attempt to sort out the confusion. (Either that or they know they are trapped in a world—our classroom—in which we make the rules, a situation described by such theorists as Stanley Fish[1].)

I heard numerous and varied attempts to discredit the contemporary theories—including deconstruction—that Dr. Adams discussed in his lectures. Some said theory is opposed to the magic of literature, which rests on the side of writers. But Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Henry James, Ezra Pound, T.S. Eliot, John Barth, and William Gass are a few of the many creative writers who have also produced theory—writers who certainly understood the pleasure and magic of literature.

Some tried to discredit deconstruction by using it as a joke to imply it is some form of intellectual sleight of mouth or destruction of meaning. When someone slipped and used the wrong word, for example, another asked, "Are you trying to deconstruct that?" A more sympathetic suggestion was that we teach our students to "deconstruct" manipulated or false language, as in the case of a salesman who asks how we are, yet is less interested in our state of being than in our money. But this is merely saying that one statement is false and one is true, and that the latter is privileged over the former, or is central, whereas the implications of deconstruction are more far-reaching, attempting to show the equality and instability of all language. These references to deconstruction as being a deliberate manipulation of meaning or as revealing a deliberate manipulation of meaning may themselves have been attempts to manipulate a theory that posits within language the absence of a fixed center of meaning.

New ideas are frightening. That is why politically paranoid countries have censorship. New ideas shatter our sense of ourselves, whatever stability we have. We see this in museums when someone looks at a work of abstract art and proclaims, "My child could do that." The viewer is confronted with something not understood and rather than admit ignorance, lashes out at that which causes him to feel small. We see this in certain students who arrive late, sit in the back, talk to friends, and sneer, "This class is boring; what's the point?"

If we're lucky, we see this in ourselves. If we recognize our ignorance, we can work to educate ourselves. In Western thought, the serpent is associated with evil, as Satan tempting us toward . . . yes, knowledge. In Eastern thought, the serpent is considered an affirmation of life, or rebirth, since the serpent sheds its skin, or old mode of thinking, for a new one.

What I suggest is intellectual curiosity and humility, a desire for knowledge even if it means accepting our ignorance rather than the more comfortable attempt to reduce new ideas, perhaps inaccurately, to something familiar.

I am not asking that we embrace these ideas wholeheartedly. We may, certainly, disagree with them. I ask only that we try to understand before dismissing them.

Many of the defenses people formulated, or the rationalizations they constructed, were in the form of defending what students

need: "Many of my students are not English majors. They don't need that." But such questions as "How do you come up with an interpretation?" or "How do you know which interpretation is right?" are profound attempts by students to understand our rules. They are also questions of theory.

Some objected that the university students are not our students. Our students have different needs. But if our courses are equivalent to university courses during the first two years and if university professors teach theory in these courses (as Professor Adams said ought to be the case), perhaps we should reconsider our view.

In a presentation Judith Hert defined critical thinking as thought that is highly self-conscious about its own process, which is a perfect description of the nature of theory. If we are to teach our students to think, why compromise on our goal? When we underestimate our students' potential, we fulfill our expectations. If we are teaching thinking, why not take this as far as we can?

Theory questions assumptions, actions, and beliefs that we have come to take for granted. Therefore, it frightens. It asks us to question what we do and think, a notion that is at the heart of a liberal arts education.

Some argued that we do not have as much time as our colleagues at the university to keep up with these ideas. Professor Adams stated as one of the implications of contemporary theory that teachers must find time to cope with new ideas and books. Perhaps we should lobby for more time. As professionals who are expected to teach courses equivalent to the first two years of a college or university, perhaps we need time to research and, if we feel so compelled, to write, since research and writing will excite us and thereby improve our teaching, not to mention provide greater empathy with and authority for our students.

In creative writing, theory can help us to understand, as Roland Barthes says, "the pleasure of the text," the play of language apart from referents in the real world. This can be liberating for the student writer who learns to discover language and ideas through the act of writing. In this case the intellect can lead us to an awareness of the creative, the source of which lies within.

In literature, a text's structure can become a source of pleasure as the mind interacts with it. This summer I used the *Bedford Introduction to Literature* in my Reading and Composition II: Introduction to Literature. It contains accessible descriptions and examples of kinds of literary criticism and proposes that theory can help students understand fundamental assumptions underlying any criticism they read.

I am developing a course in our college's Honors program that includes theory. After taking English 101 and 102, World Literature or English Literature, and History of Western Civilization, students will read essays in theory and criticism and will write essays in which they use various approaches to analyze works they have read in their previous courses. After photocopying and distributing each student's essay, colloquium members will discuss it as a text, exploring its implications with a view toward helping the writer develop ideas further and more clearly.

Despite my tone, I have no answers. I'm merely asking, along with Professor Adams and along with post-structuralist theorists, that we open ourselves up to allow possibilities to emerge.

As I tell my students, before criticizing someone's ideas, we must first attempt to understand them. If we begin with the rhetorical "So what?" we may be depriving ourselves.

The alternative to settling into mediocrity is to question what we do ourselves, to discover and examine those presuppositions that underlie our thinking, even though to do so is frightening. Studying the ideas of others who have thought about this is also frightening, since we may have difficulty understanding, and few, if any, find comfort in such a situation. But what we get out of it may be increased empathy with our students, further possibilities for teaching a text, and greater tolerance for alternative interpretations.

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[1]Stanley Fish, "Is There A Text in This Class," in *Critical Theory Since 1965*, edited by Adams and Searle (Tallahassee: Florida State University Press, 1986), 525-533. I know there are some who will, on the basis of this statement, accuse me of being authoritarian, but I am suggesting that the institutionalized classroom under anyone's approach is characterized by rules set by the instructor, who, moreover, has the power to assign grades.

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through periodic background and synthesizing lectures, extensive handouts designed to raise important questions, and frequent student writings, but I had much less control of the entire process than before.

Embarked on a new path that seemed to work well for students, I nonetheless felt ambivalent about the results because class less and less resembled the traditional courses I had taken and taught for years. I needed time out to assess what I was doing and to put

it into a perspective that included my responsibility to my discipline. The ECCTYC conference in April gave me that opportunity.

The conference's subtitle could have been "Decentering Authority—Or Revising Our Notions of Text, Interpretation, and Teaching." Morning lectures showed us how and why to expand the curriculum, celebrate interpretive ambiguity, and welcome textual difficulty. In afternoon peer workshops, we applied the morning lectures to our own classroom challenges and compared our teaching styles.

The conference's guest speaker, Professor Hazard Adams of the University of Washington, guided us on a whirlwind tour of contemporary linguistics and critical theory, along the way demystifying but not advocating Deconstruction. He illustrated his points by forays into *Alice Through the Looking Glass, Finnegan's Wake, Frankenstein, Dubliners, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead,* and an e.e. cummings poem. His observations about evolving texts and the inescapable subjectivity of all readings implicitly challenged the arguments in favor of restricting course readings to the traditional required texts.

Professor Adams invited us to reconsider what we mean by "text." If we consider title, forwards, introductions, editor's notes, various editions, our knowledge of the author and the author's times, and critical views of the text over time, then no "text" is constant.

Furthermore, identifying a fixed reader is just as impossible as identifying a permanent text, because each reader brings to a reading a unique response based on personal history, values, education, and purpose, not to mention the ephemeral considerations of mood and the distractions of the moment. Just as the *Frankenstein* that I read keeps changing, so does the "I" reading it. Through textual approaches such as New Historicism and Reader Response, we can track these fluctuations in text and reader. Because there is no authoritative text, interpretation, or ideal reader, we do best to celebrate different approaches and tolerate contradictions. If New Historicism and Reader Response criticism are especially helpful in making us skeptical of "the right answer," we are then prepared to appreciate the diverse insights provided by New Critical, Feminist, Marxist, and other readings of a text.

Broadening the curriculum and fostering eclectic interpretations does not mean replacing Jane Austen with Danielle Steele or accepting half-baked interpretations and poorly supported arguments in the name of open-mindedness. Some works withstand scrutiny. Some interpretations are more persuasive or insightful than others. Some critical approaches are more productive with certain texts. A mythological or Marxist analysis of *Heart of Darkness* seems, to me, more productive than a New Critical approach. All interpretations require logical, detailed support. We're talking about attitude: Our goal is to illuminate meanings, not to exclude them. We want to open texts, not reduce them.

During the school year, I had at times been uneasy about working on new and difficult material with students before I had "figured it out." My experiences at the conference made me much more comfortable with the notion that, as teacher, I do not have to have all the answers. In fact, I now find that notion extremely liberating. If I don't feel compelled to completely understand every text I assign and don't have to make seamless connections among all the readings, I am freer to alter my reading list in ways that make my course more challenging and exciting for both my students and me. By redesigning my syllabi to interrupt the lockstep of traditional historical sequences and genres, I can incorporate difficult and unfamiliar texts like spices in the hope that both my students and I will "discover" and experience together. I'm willing to be surprised, stymied, even wrong.

This fall, I intend to use Stevens' poem "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird" to introduce the pleasures of difficulty and the inevitable ambiguity of meaning. What I learned at the conference suggested grouping *Frankenstein, Faust,* and some Ray Bradbury selections to explore the enduring themes of intellectual pride, alienation, and the failure of empathy. It would then be interesting to compare New Historical, mythological, and Marxist interpretations of these texts to see, first, how the "texts" have changed over time and, second, how meaning changes depending on the reader's intellectual frame of reference. I'd also like to group *Dubliners, Lolita,* and *The French Lieutenant's Woman* to examine the notion of narrator and narrative point of view. I'd ask the students to explore these texts from Feminist, New Critical, and Reader Response perspectives, again to have them realize how many valid, interesting, and not necessarily complementary interpretations texts can yield. The possibilities are infinite now that I no longer have to be the final authority and no longer have to cover a fixed literary canon.

A more open-minded approach to reading lists and critical approaches will not make my classroom less authoritarian by itself. As I had seen throughout the school year, the way learning occurs must also change. Professor Adams used Alice's conversation with Humpty Dumpty to draw our attention to the chilling effect that a teacher's power can have over students.

> "When I use a word," Humpty Dumpty said, in a rather scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less."
>
> "The question is," said Alice, "whether you can make words mean so many different things."
>
> "The question is," said Humpty Dumpty, "which is to be master—that's all."
>
> Alice was too much puzzled to say anything; so after a minute Humpty Dumpty began again.

The teacher is automatically master in the classroom, by virtue of his/her superior mastery of the material. Our power may be increasingly constrained as we acknowledge the limits of our knowledge. But we have traditionally reinforced the illusion of our power by relying on the lecture method. Large classes and the need to cover a body of material encourage us to lecture to passive, sponge-like students who absorb and then regurgitate some version of what we have said. But this isn't the best way for us to teach or for them to learn, even if it was the way we learned in our college days. If we want students to develop critical thinking skills, to appreciate literature, and to make connections between what they read in class and the life they live, we must empower them to take charge of their learning. I had begun to experiment with new teaching strategies out of necessity during the school year. To my delight, the conference's format—alternating lectures, workshops, and time for reflection—mirrored the classroom model I was working toward. Furthermore, peer workshops where colleagues share ideas confirmed the wisdom of my collaborative learning experiments and added to my teaching repertoire.

In my group's most productive session, we discussed how we would interpret and teach Joyce's "Counterparts" from *Dubliners.* Someone suggested having students look up reviews and articles about the story from its publication date through today. Such research into comparative responses hones library skills and shows students that "expert" critical opinion changes. Once they see how much experts disagree, they feel freer to trust their own responses and express them. They become active rather than passive readers.

Another instructor has groups of three to five students prepare short presentations on different topics relating to a text. A larger group, perhaps ten students, encircles the presenters, takes notes, and responds to what the "teachers" say. Here, shared responsibility for information and the give and take of small working groups produce more and better work than produced by students working in isolation.

To start a class discussion another teacher, the most senior among us, said that he tries to share a personal experience that connects his life to the situation in the story. His example encourages students to do the same and, not incidentally, humanizes "the teacher" to the students. His "gambit" breaks down barriers between teacher and student and between reader and text.

Another colleague asked us to consider who was left out of "Counterparts," noting that there are few women in the story, and these few play only marginal roles. We then tried to interpret the actions of the few women who did appear. This sociological or feminist approach underscored the dysfunctionality of the story's society. We then related this society to our own. We made the kinds of connections that our students would to the effects of alcohol, family violence, and class distinctions.

A teacher who works mostly with poorly prepared students said that she would concentrate on a close reading of the first few paragraphs. She would encourage students to define unfamiliar terms, visualize the setting, and "get into" the situation. Her method immerses students in experiencing the story before they have a chance to retreat from its intimidating unfamiliarity.

Still another teacher stressed the importance of students learning enough about Joyce's Ireland to place "Counterparts" in context. Differences in accent were critical then, as they often are now. Grounding the story in history thus both acknowledges its origins and encourages students to see analogies between turn-of-the-century Ireland and present-day America.

Finally, we had a spirited discussion about the story's ending: "I'll say a Hail Mary . . . ." For some, this was a purely ironic invocation because the father continues to beat the child who prays. For others who knew the prayer, its mention was ambiguous. Although Mary does not intercede for the boy in this story, the prayer asks for mercy for all sinners, presumably including even the abusive father. Such a reading softens the story's bleak and harsh ending. Still another teacher suggested that we recognize the Virgin Mary as a weakened version of ancient female goddesses, consigned in our patriarchal culture to ineffectuality. Our discussion of this one point showed how the frame of reference we each bring to a text shaped our response.

Which technique for teaching "Counterparts" worked best? Which critical method was most illuminating? Which interpreta-

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A CURRICULUM FOR THE NINETIES

Developing a Social Consience through Literature

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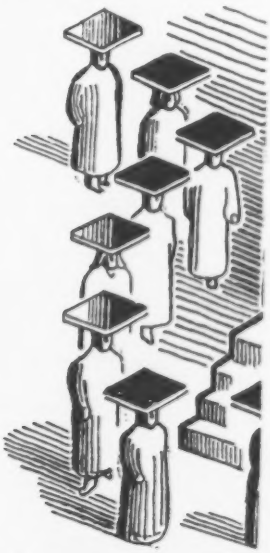
As a writing instructor at a two-year college, I find that it is nearly impossible to avoid discussions centering on the changing face of our student population; moreover, it would be unwise for those of us concerned with meeting the needs of this new "education customer" to treat him/her as we have the traditional college student. As community colleges continue to see a



decline in the number of traditional students entering their classes immediately after high school and a steady increase in the number of nontraditional students entering college from the work force, we must look toward designing courses compatible with the profile of today's working adult reader/writer.

Admittedly, identifying the particular curricular needs of each of the nontraditional student groups we currently encounter in our literature and composition classes would be too exhaustive a task for this medium; consequently, the narrowly focused observations herein will target that on-the-job adult student mentioned above and offer some suggestions on fashioning a literature and composition course that aims at the development of an asset fading quickly from and imperative to the character of modern business, no less the modern world: a social conscience. Times, in fact, mandate that we English instructors acknowledge and promote literature's crucial contribution toward the development of the next generation's operant value system.

If this proposition seems a minimalist atempt at mediation between the Edinburgh group and the Oxford classicists, perhaps it's time to address the twentieth century irony apparent in the longstanding feud between utility and morality. Rather than argue as to which should be the aim of higher education, goodness or usefulness, those of us behind the podiums of this and the coming generation's classrooms might better ponder a synergy of the two formulas. Cultivation of the intellect, then, should be viewed by educators as more than a noble pursuit; in the truest sense it must enable its possessor to "diffuse good, as a blessing, or a gift, or power, or a treasure, first to the owner, then through him to the world" (Newman 128). Literature cultivates the intellect. Literature can empower students to shape their world admirably by connecting the positive and negative forces of fictional worlds with those same forces as they exist in the real world.

First, literature allows students to understand the relationship between self and society. The reader/writer who constantly searches for truth is one who continually questions what is important in life, deducing, finally, that he/she has options in his/her interactions with the outside world. The lessons painfully gleaned by Scrooge in Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, for example, awaken literature students to the possibility of benevolence mitigating personal gain. Empathic identification with both protagonist and antagonist (selfish, exploitative employer and kind, exploited employee) leads the reader to surmise that the happier entrepeneur is the one who reaches beyond self indulgence to consider the overall human condition.

Likewise, Dickens' *David Copperfield* offers the jaded, self-satisfied modern reader a powerful indictment of the sort of villainy that threatens to impede moral progress. Struggling to become "the hero of his own life," David faces the criminal perfidy of the embezzling Uriah Heep, whose insistence that he is a humble man drones over his sly, conniving actions—hear the ring of an Ivan Boesky, Leona Helmsley, Michael Milken? Heep's eerily lidless eyes and subhuman nature make David's repudiation (interestingly, he escapes tyranny through books and stories) all the more meaningful an affirmation of properly placed loyalties and a sound and generous heart. Again, students are able to pinpoint, via literature, the primary contingency in a developing world view: good people make a good world.

Second, literature provides students a means by which to discover an "inner self," an ideological self whose acts are consistent with and exemplary of a personal code of ethics. The way that an individual will behave in the world is informed by his/her understanding of right and wrong and predicated upon the ability to extend the inner self into the outer social circle. Much of Hawthorne's work will do the trick here, but since "Young Goodman Brown" is so widely recognizable a piece, let's briefly examine its potential for forming a social conscience. Immediately apparent in the tale is a treatment of the age old epistemological question: Can man know evil? Students are quick to point out that in his obsession to know evil and thereby avoid it, Goodman Brown excludes the possibility of social communion and denies himself true goodness; it seems that both he and Jim Bakker are looking for evil in all the wrong places.

Similarly, Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* helps students probe complex ethical questions that underpin a search for a self capable of making appropriate choices in a chaotic world. The finely crafted composite of human nature expressed in the characters of Fyodor, Dimitri, Ivan, Aloysha, and Smerdyakov defines and explains the impulses and motivations that guide our behavior. Ironically, the miscarriage of justice portrayed in the novel is incidental; the real focus of the book is the contemplation of inner self and the possibility for all facets of one's nature to coalesce and successfully connect with the outer life. Here again, students gain from experience in resolving important ethical dilemmas.

Clearly, literature is an important force in a student's decision to become one kind of person or another, particularly when that student lives in a world where presidents lie, ministers cheat, and bankers steal. This is the world of our nontraditional community college writers today, and they are out there as participants, empowered to decide what course tomorrow's world will take. As literature and composition instructors, we can show these students how principles of honesty and fairness, fostered in fictional works, can overlap into the real world of fax machines, corporate mergers, and stock market indexes.

Designing a curriculum that addresses the positive and negative attributes of human interaction isn't difficult, given the fund of

rich canonical selections available. In fact, George Abraham identifies a hierarchical schematic which consists of literary selections that embody such positive and negative traits as caring, honesty, fairness, loyalty, deception, betrayal, jealousy, vengeance (120-122). using his suggestions as a springboard, I have assembled several thematic reading lists and devised course outlines geared at shaping the social conscience through fictional models (see below). The positive responses to and hearty endorsements of such courses of study that I have received from my students have, over the years, assured me that literature surely does continue to have a significant place among today's diverse community college population.

It *is* a new world—tainted and driven by selfish gain and greed for power. Going back to the moral lessons of classical literature helps to prove to students that they honestly have choices in deciding what their world will be. As John Henry Cardinal Newman so eloquently put it, "If then a practical end must be assigned to a university course, I say it is that of training good members of society. Its art is the art of social life, and its end is fitness for the world" (130).

Suggested Literary Selections

CARING: 1 Corinthians:13; Cather, *My Antonia*; Whitman, "Reconciliation"; Pastan, "Ethics"; Andersen, "The Snow Queen"; Shelley, *Frankenstein*.

HONESTY: Blake, "The Poison Tree"; Ibsen, *An Enemy of the People*; Cather, "Paul's Case"; Shakespeare, "My Mistress' Eyes"; O'Connor, "First Confession"; Crane, "The Wayfarer."

FAIRNESS: Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*; Chaucer, "The Wife of Bath's Tale"/ "The Clerk's Tale"; Melville, "Bartleby the Scrivener"; Jackson, "The Lottery"; Swift, "A Modest Proposal."

LOYALTY: Malory, *Morte D'Arthur*; Sophocles, *Antigone*; Arnold, "Dover Beach"; *Hercules and His Twelve Labors*.

DECEPTION: Bambara, "The Lesson"; Williams, *The Glass Menagerie*; Hellman, *The Children's Hour*; Miller, *Death of a Salesman*; Ibsen, *A Doll's House*; O'Connor, "Good Country People."

BETRAYAL: Thoreau, "Civil Disobedience"; Strindberg, *The Father*; "Robin Hood's Death and Burial"; Miller, *A View from the Bridge*.

GREED: Jonson, *The Alchemist*; Frost, "Nothing Gold Can Stay"; Lewis, *Babbitt*; Wordsworth, "The World Is Too Much With Us."

JEALOUSY: Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises*; Shakespeare, *A Winter's Tale*; Robinson, "Richard Cory"; Browning, "My Last Duchess."

VENGEANCE: Euripides, *Medea*; Melville, *Moby Dick*; Bronte, *Wuthering Heights*; Dumas, *The Count of Monte Cristo*; Shakespeare, *Hamlet*.

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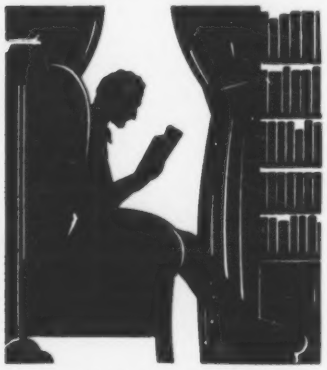
FROM MOVIES TO PAGE

(Continued from Page 3)

characters' feelings and thoughts, either through an omniscient or first-person narration, oftentimes leaving the student with greater understanding of the characters than the characters have of themselves.

For example, in Willa Cather's "Paul's Case" the author explains Paul's internal reaction to the contrast between his hours spent



as an usher in the artificial splendor of Carnegie Hall and his return to his middle class home on Cordelia Street:

> It was a respectable street, where all the houses were exactly alike . . . . Paul never went up Cordelia Street without a shudder of loathing. His home was next to the house of the Cumberland minister. He approached it tonight with the nerveless sense of defeat, the hopeless feeling of sinking back forever into ugliness and commonness that he had always had when he came home. The moment he turned into Cordelia Street he felt the waters close above his head. After each of these orgies of living, he experienced all the physical depression which follows a debauch; the loathing of respectable beds, of common food, of a house penetrated by kitchen odours; a shuddering repulsion for the flavourless, colourless mass of every-day existence; a morbid desire for cool things and soft lights and fresh flowers. (165-6)

While the film version of this story, directed by Lamont Johnson and starring Eric Roberts, certainly captures Paul's preference for the soft lights and artificial surroundings of theater over the realistic existence of his social class, its images of external realities seem shallow compared to Cather's probing and insightful prose, which depicts the troubled youth's complex malaise. Although it was written some eighty years ago, students today usually find the "case" of this suicidal young man contemporary and compelling. During classroom discussions, they certainly refer to the film, but they most often turn to such telling paragraphs as the one above to more clearly interpret and understand the character. Although the film version is first rate, most students recognize the greater internal depths of the prose. This one lesson creates the beginnings of a greater appreciation of and respect for the unique qualities of literature.

A comparative study of the short story and the film interpretation of the Ambrose Bierce short story "Parker Adderson, Philosopher" also is rewarding, but for different reasons. The film portrait of the captured Northern spy Adderson is of a melancholy man who tries to hide his fear of death through somber philosophizing in the face of pre-execution interrogation by the Southern general. In the film he seems educated, but listless, weary, resigned, and sensitive. However, students overwhelmingly *read* the character differently in the literature: he is perceived as a strong, cocky, wise-cracking philosopher bravely flaunting his coming execution and, therefore, death as something insignificant. This difference in character portrayals from fiction to film invariably leads students to a closer reading of the fiction's narration and dialogue to justify their reading and to understand how Bierce created this "tone" and portrait of Adderson so markedly different from the posture of the actor in the film.

Questions naturally arise: Why did the director weave the tale this way? Which is more enjoyable? Which character portrayal is more admirable? Or pitiable? Furthermore, the filmmaker adds characters and scenes. Why? Do these additions continue the same theme and tone of the story?

Of course, additional characters and story sidelines often are necessary as a filmmaker transfers the narrative nature of fiction to the visual nature of film. The filmmaker must use images, dialogue, and interractions to *show* the story, while the author writes narrative (often commenting on a character's thoughts) and dialogue to *tell* the story. (However, written thoughts can imaginatively *show* the story also.) As Marcus notes, and this is very important in classroom considerations, the most important aspect in deciding whether a film interpretation is true to the fiction is whether the tone and theme of the fiction is captured within the images and sounds of the film (121). In comparing the two and in deciding this point, students invariably return to the literature for deeper analysis. This closer inspection of the fiction is exactly what we literature instructors want our students to do.

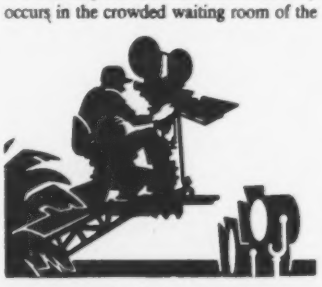
Something interesting happens when comparing French director Robert Enrico's award-winning film *An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge* with Bierce's short story of the same name. (The film, not part of the PBS series, was made in 1962.) The vast majority of students are most often surprised (and rightly feel tricked) to find at story's end that Peyton Farquhar has fantasized his escape from the noose and that the escape sequence occurred completely in his mind during the course of a few seconds as he is falling from the bridge to be hanged at rope's end. This classic black-and-white film is superb. The short story may be Bierce's best. Interestingly, repeated experience teaching this comparison has shown that if a class sees the film version first, the majority say that, yes, they were tricked by the film into believing the escape was real, but that in reading the story later they easily note many foreshadowing clues that the escape was a fantasy. They contend, of course, that they would not have been tricked by the fiction if they had read it first.

But reverse the order in another class—have them read the story first and see the film later—and the majority perception is reversed: they contend that while they were tricked by the fiction, they easily saw the foreshadowing clues in the film. However, this interesting example of the old saying "forewarned is forearmed" is not the significance of the lesson. Rather, the significant factor is that in whatever order the two versions are studied, the result is similar: students search for foreshadowing elements in both art forms.

Perhaps the best film in the PBS anthology is director Stan Lathan's interpretation of Ernest Gaines' "The Sky is Gray." However, despite its excellence, this film provides one of the most telling examples of the *greater internal insights of prose*. And this is simply because this marvelous short story is told through the first-person narrative viewpoint of an eight-year-old boy. Film generally has difficulty capturing the tone of fiction written in the first-person voice because film necessarily focuses in a more objective, third-person, camera-view fashion on images, dialogue, and actions, rather than on the continuous personal voice, internal thoughts, and subjective viewpoint expressed (usually) by the protagonist in a first-person fiction. And because the greatest charm of "The Sky is Gray" is the innocence of its young protagonist's first-person narrative, it presents a daunting task of interpretation for the filmmaker.

The beauty of reading the written story (similar in some ways to the beauty of Huck Finn's first-person narrative) is the disparity between what the black child perceives and what we adult readers perceive. When the child's mother takes him to town to have a painful tooth removed, we clearly understand the unfair society of the segregated Southern town of the 1940s. However, the young narrator merely absorbs and innocently recounts, without making any didactic judgments. Furthermore, throughout the story we can see more clearly than he that through her sometimes seemingly harsh actions, rather than explanations, his mother is trying to teach him how to grow into a man who is proud and resourceful in a society with racist double standards for blacks and whites. It is the disparity between the narrator's childlike innocence and the students' more aware perspective of the situation that causes them to become active participants in the written story, as they literally interpret the child's narrative into more mature terms line by line.

For example, the crucial scene of the story occurs in the crowded waiting room of the



dentist's office for blacks-only where a young black college student angrily disagrees with and confronts a black preacher who has urged a woman not to contemplate society's racism but to have religious faith: "'Best not to even try,' the preacher says. 'He works in mysterious ways—wonders to perform'" (418). The confrontation clearly shows two currents of black thought in the 1940s regarding racism—passive acceptance buoyed by religious faith and growing protest and action fostered by education. The confrontation ends with the preacher slapping the student for being insolent to his elder. The preacher leaves and the student continues expounding his views to a woman in the waiting room. This entire scene is marvelously realized in the film version, but the boy's childlike reaction, which is consistent with his narrative voice throughout the story, is lost in the film:

> "Citizens have certain rights," the [student] says. "Name me one right that you have. One right, granted by the Constitution, that you can exercise in Bayonne."
>
> The lady don't answer him. She just looks at him like she don't know what he's talking 'bout. I know I don't. (423)

Although the child protagonist is too young to understand, we readers recognize the meaning more fully (although some historical background may be needed for many students unaware of racism in the 1940s), and perhaps we contemplate it a bit more deeply because the author causes us to bridge the generation gap between us and the child narrator.

Similarly, when the boy and his mother must wait outside, stranded in the segregated town while the dentist is on a two-hour lunch break, the film conveys the cold, but in the short story the degree of the bitter, freezing wind chill and its effect on the young child is much more striking. While the young boy tries his best to imitate the brave and stoic attitude of his mother in the harsh weather, his internal thoughts tell the story:

> The sleet's coming down plenty now. They hit the pave and bounce like rice. Oh, Lord; oh Lord, I pray. Don't let me die, don't let me die, don't let me die, Lord. (428)

While the film expertly catches the overall content of the fiction, its third-person camera-eye viewpoint (which has its own strengths and charm) loses the charm and "voice" of the young boy's first-person narrative. Furthermore, in several earlier scenes the film images also seem to fall short of truly conveying the deep poverty of the family, as if the film images gloss over what the child narrator unintentionally conveys through his honest and innocent story telling. While the film is outstanding and certainly captures Gaines' art, students usually notice this pattern of softening the harsh conditions of the boy's life.

Another important lesson uncovered in studying the two version of "The Sky is Gray" (especially from a creative writing perspective) is that the same story can be told in different ways and still achieve many similar effects. In other words, while students may recognized that fiction has greater flexibility of narrative voice, point of view, and internal insights into a character's mind, they also recognize the unique strengths of film. For example, the film's images provide visual awareness of the overall setting, and the excellent soundtrack provides musical mood that the fiction cannot. However, most significantly, the third-person objective viewpoint of the camera shows both mother and son equally, elevating the mother character to a greater role, actually making her as much the protagonist as the boy. Thus, although

(Continued on Page 16)

UPSTATE/DOWNSTATE
News from the Regions

To help ECCTYC better communicate with and reflect the concerns of English instructors in the California community colleges, the 107 California community colleges have been grouped by region, each region having two directors. The following list will let you know which region your college is in and who are your regional directors. The directors encourage you to call them if you have any concerns pertinent to English departments and teaching and if you have any regional news—a book or article you have published, a presentation you've given, an award or a grant you've received, a special speaker at your college, a new project in your department. Such items will be published in the News From the Regions column, which we hope to run in every issue of *i.e.*

ECCTYC's Ten Regional Divisions

REGION I: NORTHERN CALIFORNIA
Directors: KEN COONEY, *Shasta College*; RICHARD EDMUNDS, *Yuba College*.
Colleges: Butte, College of the Redwoods, College of the Siskiyous, Feather River, Lassen, Mendocino, Shasta, Yuba.

REGION II: SAN FRANCISCO BAY
Directors: JERRY HERMAN, *Laney College*; GLORIA REID, *Ohlone College*.
Colleges: Chabot, City College of San Francisco, College of Alameda, College of Marin, College of San Mateo, Contra Costa, Diablo Valley, Indian Valley, Laney, Las Positas, Los Medanos, Merritt, Napa, Ohlone, Santa Rosa, Skyline, Solano, Vista.

REGION III: SAN FRANCISCO SOUTH BAY/ MONTEREY
Directors: JOHN LOVAS, *De Anza College*; JO FORD, *Mission College*.
Colleges: Cabrillo, Canada, De Anza, Evergreen, Foothill, Gavilan, Hartnell, Mission, Monterey Peninsula, San Jose City, West Valley.

REGION IV: NORTH VALLEY
Directors: MARY ANN COX, *San Joaquin Delta College*; DENISE SPISAK, *Cosumnes River College*.
Colleges: American River, Columbia, Cosumnes River, Humphreys, Lake Tahoe, Merced, Modesto Junior, Sacramento City, San Joaquin Delta, Sierra.

REGION V: SOUTH VALLEY
Directors: WILLIAM DECKER, *College of the Sequoias*; HELEN GORDON, *Bakersfield College*.
Colleges: Bakersfield, College of the Sequoias, Fresno City, Kings River Community, Porterville, Taft, West Hills.

REGION VI: CENTRAL COAST
Directors: LYNN FAUTH, *Oxnard College*; HUGH PLATT, *Cuesta College*.
Colleges: Allan Hancock, Cuesta, Moorpark, Oxnard, Santa Barbara City, Ventura.

REGION VII: NORTH LOS ANGELES
Directors: CARL FRIEDLANDER, *Los Angeles City College*; VELORIS LANG, *Glendale College*.
Colleges: Antelope Valley, Citrus, College of the Canyons, East Los Angeles, Glendale, Los Angeles Harbor, Los Angeles City, Los Angeles Mission, Los Angeles Pierce, Los Angeles Southwest, Los Angeles Trade-Technical, Los Angeles Valley, Mt. St. Mary's, Pasadena City, Rio Hondo, Santa Monica, West Los Angeles.

REGION VIII: SOUTH LOS ANGELES
Directors: BRENDA BRUNO, *Saddleback College*; THOMAS LEW, *El Camino College*.
Colleges: Cerritos, Coastline, Compton, Cypress, El Camino, Golden West, Fullerton, Irvine Valley, Long Beach City, Marymount Palos Verdes, Orange Coast, Rancho Santiago, Saddleback.

REGION IX: SAN BERNARDINO
Directors: ROBERT RIPPY, *San Bernardino Valley College*; LINDA NURICK, *Riverside City College*.
Colleges: Barstow, Cerro Cosa, Chaffey, College of the Desert, Crafton Hills, Mt. San Antonio, Mt. San Jacinto, Palo Verde, Riverside City, San Bernardino Valley, Victor Valley.

REGION X: SAN DIEGO
Directors: MURIEL DAVIS, *San Diego Mesa College*; NANCY NADEAU, *Imperial Valley College*.
Colleges: Cuymaca, Grossmont, Imperial Valley, Mira Costa, Palomar, San Diego City, San Diego Mesa, San Diego Miramar, Southwestern.

FOR J, ON HIS THIRTEENTH BIRTHDAY

The bones.
Suddenly my hands are huge,
grown powerful in all these days
of kneading bread and my husband's back
. . . too big for this child's shoulders.

He *is* a child — poised before the open refrigerator
Scavenging like some sky-flung raptor
and I, growing older by the minute,
musing over his heightened shoulder
at the yellowed clippings magnetic on the door.

I thought he was gone: the child. I thought
some volatile adolescent, a storm in all directions,
brooded and grumbled in my house
while I mutter about in my feathers,
clucking and fussing.

I was wrong. Under my hand,
that shoulder is winged in fragility like a maple seed,
like the thin bones of a flying squirrel;
more comically assembled than a grasshopper;
greener; easier to pulverize.

I am stunned to silence
by the smallness of it.
My fingers remember all day, and remember to loosen.

MARGARET J. GERARD
Orange Coast College

REGIONS VII AND VIII: NORTH AND SOUTH LOS ANGELES AREAS

From the Sidelines: The English Comp/ESL Alliance

by MARY SPANGLER
Los Angeles Valley College

Early this year the Center for Academic Interinstitutional Programs (CAIP), an arm of the Graduate School of Education at UCLA, created a new liaison with local community colleges. It competitively selected eight Commmunity College Scholars in as many disciplines to develop faculty alliances within each of the following areas: English composition, English as a second language, ethnic/gender studies, foreign language, life science, history/social sciences, humanities/literature, and physical science. The scholars meet together monthly to discuss new ideas and issues in each other's fields. Of particular interest here is the English Composition/ESL Alliance.

The co-chairs of this alliance for 1990 are Mary Spangler (Los Angeles Valley College) and Ronald Lapp (Los Angeles City College). The alliance has several specific objectives, chief of which is to provide professional development opportunities for its members. A second goal is to provide a forum for an exchange of ideas between English and ESL faculty. Working with a twenty-member Advisory Committee, Spangler and Lapp plan programs, lectures, and meetings that give English and ESL faculty the opportunity to exchange ideas on classroom teaching issues and curricula in an atmosphere of informality. Anyone in the greater Los Angeles area interested in participating on the Advisory Committee is welcome, and all teachers of English and ESL are invited to attend the programs that are offered during the spring and fall semesters.

CAIP is noted for creating and strengthening academic links between UCLA and local area high schools and community colleges. These liaisons intend to "increase student retention and to disseminate, through workshops and publications, teaching strategies that encourage student success." One such successful and well-known link is the Transfer Alliance Program (TAP) which helps faculty develop curriculum to provide stronger academic preparation for students transferring to UCLA.

On 16 May 1990, English Comp/ESL Alliance participants attended a reading workshop co-sponsored by CAIP and the Los Angeles City College English Department in conjunction with its first READATHON and held on LACC's campus. Jeanne Gunner, Ph.D., lecturer with the UCLA Writing Programs for the past six years, presented a two-hour session—"Rhetorical Reading: Reading What's Not on the Page"—which began with a brief formal paper, moved to an informative hands-on, interactive workshop, and concluded with a round-table discussion. The group focused on critical reading areas, what to read, and reading student writing.

Dr. Gunner, author of *The Course of Ideas*, 2nd ed. (Harper & Row, 1990) and *Beyond the Conventions* (Harper & Row, 1990), discussed the teaching of reading from the perspective of changing our notions about what reading ability means. Her approach emphasizes the process of author/text/reader interaction while deemphasizing the more traditional content/comprehension/product approach. According to Gunner, in the process approach of reading narrative the reader enters into the text, imposes meaning upon it, and negotiates that meaning with the text by adopting and then reformulating the author's language in the context of the larger reading community. In other words, "Meaning resides not on the page but in the interaction of the text of an author, the mind of a reader, and the community within which the reading act takes place." Dr. Gunner talked about the "rich reader" as one with "the means to become involved in a power relationship with the author." However, community college students, who are often poor readers, can take responsibility for their reading through a process-oriented approach to teaching. Reading taught this way goes beyond questions like "What does the text say?" to include "How does it say it?" "What are its features?" and "What does it want me to do?" One of the goals of the writer is to be "the one who gets to say how things are: the writer wins by controlling the reader's attention and interpretation process." Similarly, the reader wants to become the author by saying what the text means to him or her. The readers

who are at a disadvantage in this process are those who cannot look at how a writer uses written language to affect the reader.

Dr. Gunner's presentation showed what an instructor can do to help students recognize some rhetorical codes that exist, for example, punctuation, diction, and sentence style. She discussed a writer's choice of colons, capitals, and periods to "demonstrate intention to begin and to end." Similarly, punctuation "encodes the reader's pace of the reading . . . and tells how ideas relate to each other." To illustrate that students need to see the codes before deciphering them as reading tools, she distributed an unpunctuated excerpt from *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat* by Oliver Sacks. After each participant individually tried punctuating and thereby gaining some power over the reading, the group reviewed the passage as the author had marked it. In the process, the group saw how much controlling of the reader is going on. The punctuation revealed the author's voice and the degree to which the author was "an active presence." A lively discussion of these concepts continued for at least thirty minutes. The response to the workshop was positive with comments that the presentation was "intelligent," "stimulating," and "enriching." The different approach to the reading process was judged most helpful by the participants. Dr. Gunner also made available a bibliography for those interested in more information.

Another seminar for English comp and ESL instruction will be led by Donna Brinton, Audio Visual Consultant and Academic Coordinator for ESL Services at UCLA, Wednesday, 17 October, from 4 to 6 p.m. on the UCLA campus. Her presentation, "Responding to the Needs of Mainstreamed ESL Students in English Classes," will feature a hands-on task, a discussion period, and an optional tour of the UCLA media lab. For details about the room location and for parking reservations, call Dorene Kaplan by 15 October at the CAIP office at UCLA (213) 825-7749.

Mary Spangler is a long-time English teacher at Los Angeles Valley College and the co-author of several textbooks on writing. She is the UCLA Community College Scholar for English Composition for 1990.

REGION X: SAN DIEGO AREA

Innovative Program and Procedures: A Panel of Presentations

by MURIEL DAVIS and NANCY NADEAU
San Diego Mesa College and *Imperial Valley College*

Innovative programs and procedures were featured at Region X's panel meeting, 11 May 1990, organized by co-directors MURIEL DAVIS and NANCY NADEAU and graciously hosted by Southwestern College. Brief panel presentations were followed by questions and comments from participants—over thirty instructors from the San Diego-Imperial Valley area.

JOHN GREGG *(San Diego Mesa College)* presented on the exit exam that English instructors from San Diego City, Mesa, and Miramar have conceived, organized, and implemented to serve as a pass/fail final for their pre-1A course. Their holistically-graded essay exam has several advantages: 1) students better prepared at the 1A level; 2) clearer focusing of English department standards; and 3) enhanced communication among composition instructors, who meet voluntarily each semester to read one another's students' essays in a collegial setting on one of the three campuses. [For more information contact John Gregg, (619) 230-2512.]

FRED FISCHER *(Imperial Valley College)* told about IVC's "English Challenge," an annual awards workshop for local high school seniors to compete in essay writing, creative writing, journalism, ESL, and literary analysis. This spring event publicizes the English major, recruits high school seniors, and gives high school and community college English instructors an opportunity to socialize. [For more information contact Fred Fischer, (619) 352-8320, ext. 224.]

PATRICIA KELLY *(Southwestern College)* presented on her Classroom Research project to promote cultural understanding among minorities, particularly between her Hispanic ESL students and the African American students

who are coming to her class to make presentations and lead discussions. Pat reports a preliminary success: her students are now more willing to ask African American

(Continued on Page 16)

REVIEWS

(Continued from Page 6)

young soldiers as they lost their ability to feel any compassion for anyone except their fighting comrades; the empty return to the U.S. with no reception, bitterness, the destructive psychological and physiological aftereffects.

But we also find a unique view through these Hispanic voices. Miguel Lemus, Charlie Rodriguez, Fred Cavasos, Diego Garcia—just a few of those drafted right out of high school—no choices, no college deferments, no "draft counseling." The large

proportion of Chicanos ended up in the most dangerous assignments: "When I [Miguel Lemus] got to Viet Nam they made a platoon of all the Chicanos there—all grunts" (33). This kind of racism is talked about by many of the interviewees: Freddie Delgado relates, "So when I got to the 101st, I wanted to be sent to the door gunners school. I wanted to be a door gunner. I didn't want to be a grunt no more. I thought the door gunners had a better life. Being an experienced M-60 gunner, I thought I'd get into the school quick. I applied and they didn't even pick me. It was *gabachos* that had that job. It was risky, but I think it was a lot better than being a grunt" (171-2). And Mike Soliz adds, "One of the things I couldn't understand was why our unit, out in the field, was eighty percent minorities: Blacks, Chicanos, Indians and Puerto Ricans. It seemed like it was the minorities who were always the infantry guys and the other people (whites) who had the rear jobs, maintenance, clerks and desk jobs. I got to see plenty of that over there" (86).

The anger of the Chicanos against the Vietnamese, both those they fought for and those they fought against, is also noted in several interviews. Herbert De La Fuente says, "I don't know why I called the Vietnamese gooks. I guess because everybody did" (146). And Ernest adds some ironic bitterness: "I used to hate the ARVN's the most because we were supposed to be helping them and they were taking advantage of us . . . . We gave the South Vietnamese a lot of support: food, equipment, arms, built houses and roads for them. Heck, Bien Hoa had better roads than Corcoran" (160). Larry Holguin says, "The ARVN's had no backbone, they had no pride in themselves. They would stay with you if you were kicking the enemy's ass. They'd book quick if we weren't kicking ass. We didn't have any place to go. We had to follow the system. They could just take off, run into the jungle and they'd be gone" (76-7).

One of the strongest aspects of this book for me was the power of these veterans' descriptions in vivid language (a glossary and a list of English translations are included at the end of the book for readers who need them) to remind us of the ugly terror of war. Miguel Gastelo tells:

> During the time we were trapped, we were getting shot at at all the time. We couldn't sleep with all that racket and harassment. The bodies sort of melted in the jungle, you couldn't even tell what race the bodies were, all you could see was the wet imprint that the bodies made on the ground. We couldn't eat in peace with the flies all over the place. They'd get on our food after eating on the dead bodies. The last two days we didn't receive any food at all; we began to eat weeds. We got so hungry that I remember one of the soldiers and me glancing at the side and seeing the open arm wound of one of the soldiers, and then him saying, "Man that meat looks good." (130)

Freddie Delgado recalls:

> When we got hit over there in Cambodia, we called radio *y de volada*, before you knew it, they had the jets. When they left, the cobra was combing the area, spraying the whole area with rockets and mini-guns. Everything was like nothing could survive in there. They didn't find nothing, *eh*, when they went to look for body count. I was about the third man back with the sixty machine gun. That motherfucker is heavy, when you walk in the mud, it sucks you in. (169)

And one last sample, this from Trujillo himself:

> As we evacuated the wounded, it began to rain lightly. What really upset me was that we stacked Jones, Van Hetsman, Martinelli and the Medic upon one another. We put them on the chopper as if they were sides of beef. They weren't even put in body bags. As the helicopter took off, it was eerie to see them with their eyes staring blankly toward the sky and their hair blowing freely. They seemed to know that they were dead. (156)

I think Charley Trujillo's book deserves our reading and discussing. Your college may also want to consider inviting him to your campus, individually or as a part of a panel, to discuss with your students and your community this neglected perspective of the Viet Nam war. At our school we found that exchange to be a valuable one.

□ Trujillo, Charley. *Soldados: Chicanos in Viet Nam.* San Jose, CA: Chusma House Publications, 1990. $9.95, 179 pp.

LETTERS

(Continued from Page 2)

could profit from having a statewide conference every year, rather than on alternate years. With the increased funding, we could afford larger honoraria and thus could have a "big name" keynoter, as some of the evaluations have suggested. We also could buy some reassigned time for the conference coordinators, so that they are not expected to teach a full load of English classes and still do all the time-consuming jobs involved in putting on a worthwhile conference.

I don't really believe that there is any English instructor in our California CCs who could not afford a small annual membership fee; these monies would make our organization more financially stable and would allow each of us to serve a more active part in ECCTYC.

BILL DECKER
College of the Sequoias

MORE ON THE 1989 ECCTYC CONFERENCE

I was especially pleased with the March issue of *inside english* because of the thorough coverage you gave the ECCTYC Conference in Burlingame last October. That conference, one of the two or three most useful conferences I've ever attended, was worthy of the splendid coverage you gave it.

In a conference boasting so many sections devoted to our discipline, you and those who covered the sessions needed to be selective in what *inside english* reported and could not print all the points made at the sessions. Perhaps you might be able to add the following additional points made during the Krashen and the McQuade sessions.

Stephen Krashen, a USC linguistics professor, said the evidence is in. One can no longer argue whether skill building or pleasure reading programs lead to better readers and writers.

In his talk "The Power of Reading: Voluntary Reading as a Source of Competency," Krashen listed in detail the many studies that he said prove conclusively that free reading is more effective in teaching English skills than drill or group reading.

He argued that spelling, vocabulary, and grammar drills often are counter-productive. At most a person will learn two hundred words in a vocabulary course, but the average grade school student learns about four thousand words a year on his own. Comic book readers learn more words from comic books in a year than from school vocabulary drills.

Free reading teaches spelling better than spelling lessons and tests. People learn grammar better by spending their time reading than by working out grammar drills. They pick up their writing skills by reading for pleasure.

Don McQuade, Professor of English and Dean of Undergraduate Studies at UC, Berkeley, said, "Students have exquisite oral traditions which they bring into the classroom, and we ask them to check those traditions at the door." Instructors should start their students off by asking them to write about things they already know. For example, foreign students should be asked to translate stories from their own oral traditions into English.

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REPORT CARD

It's hard to be objective
when you're grading
the paper of a guy
who died suddenly.
You have a tendency
to give the paper an undeserved
good grade. I thought it
might be important.
I knew, for instance,
that his report card
would be sent home.
His mother had called
and left a message for me,
so I guessed she'd done it
for the others. I wondered
if they, the others in history,
or psychology, or wherever,
were also grappling with this.
I thought strategically:
straight "A's" would look false.
Would the others consider this?
The semester was over;
the forms clearly asked for a grade.
But instead of paying attention
to his work, which instructors
should do, I found myself
alone in my office
recalling his frailness,
his slow shuffle,
the way he always wore
a sweater or jacket,
even on warm days,
and his many absences.

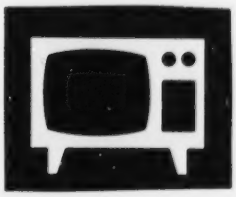
His death was a surprise to me.
I searched his work to justify
a strong grade and I found
his essay on "pet peeves"
in a stack of late papers I hadn't read.
Most students had been peeved
by smokers in restaurants,
or brothers leaving
the toilet lids up,
or people eating with their
mouths open. But this guy
was bothered by his health
which was painful sometimes
and caused him to miss school.
It was a well-focused essay,
clear and to-the-point.
Just how did he cope with his pet peeve?
(That was part of the assignment.)
Well, he tried not to worry,
because, as he wrote,
he had the best doctors in the world.
I looked at his paper and found
nothing wrong with it.
And sat in my office
pondering,
what kind of grade
to give the dead.

PATRICK KENNEDY
Golden West College

FROM MOVIES TO PAGE

(Continued from Page 12)

her actions basically remain the same as she teaches her son by actions rather than by words, the camera makes her a more visible and leading character than she is in the written story. While this outstanding film adds a more visible rendition of the mother character, it



subtracts the internal thoughts, feelings, and voice of the child—qualities that elevate this short story to excellence.

As is usually the case, students seem very interested in these changes of artistic emphasis from fiction to film, in itself an instructional achievement; moreover, recognizing these changes becomes empowering: by studying the two versions side-by-side students soon gain the confidence and ability to make value decisions regarding whether the film has maintained or enhanced characterizations, faithfully interpreted theme, and accurately captured the tone of the fiction. Thus, using this comparison and contrast method in the classroom, even if only occasionally, gives students a framework, an object for comparision, and a definite purpose for closely probing the literature. As this is done, the students usually become more literate and more confident in their literacy. In most cases, while recognizing the unique strengths of the film, they also recognize the greater ability of fiction to more personally reveal internal motivations, thoughts, and feelings.

Therefore, using the familiar to introduce the unfamiliar results in the majority of our students discovering that fiction has its own unique depth that cannot quite be captured on film: and that is simply the beauty of the human voice sharing, examining, and reflecting the complex inner mainsprings of our human experience.

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As a graduate and post-graduate student, Patrick Kennedy has taken several courses at Cal State Long Beach on critical approaches to film and literature. He has been using film to teach introduction to literature courses in community colleges for the past five years. In the summer of 1989, he also used this comparison and contrast method in an exchange program to teach an "American Short Fiction and Film" course to advanced ESL students at the Universidad Autonoma de Baja California Sur in La Paz, Mexico. Kennedy was a group discussion leader at the recent ECCTYC literature conference in Lake Arrowhead.

LETTERS

(Continued from Page 15)

McQuade said that Berkeley requires that students write eight thousand to ten thousand words during a semester, but he claimed the word count did not originate at Berkeley, but was insisted on by the community colleges. ("Counting words was the way the community colleges wanted it to be.") He added, however, that it is not necessary for instructors to read all sets of papers, only that eight to ten thousand words be assigned in order to meet the Berkeley requirement.

McQuade argued that instructors spend too much time correcting papers. Their excessive corrections, he said, only reinforce students' negative feelings about their writing.

RICHARD S. HARMETZ
Professor of English
Los Angeles Trade Technical College

ECCTYC LIT CONFERENCE

(Continued from Page 10)

tion was most convincing? Our group wisely avoided trying to answer such questions. We benefited from exposure to all points of view. No one controlled the discussion, although our chairperson gently guided and coached us. We all functioned as teachers and students. And in these workshops we internalized and adapted the material Professor Adams had given us in his lectures.

I have focused on only a few of the benefits I received from attending the ECCTYC Literature Conference. This fall semester I expect to discover others. I'm sure my fellow participants formed their own interpretations of this "text." I'd like to hear them, too.

Karin B. Costello, former Head of the UCLA Extension Writers' Program, also previously taught part-time at Santa Monica College and full-time at UCLA.

UPSTATE/DOWNSTATE

(Continued from Page 14)

students questions both in class and outside of class. [For more information contact Patricia Kelly, (619) 421-6700.]

DAN MOODY *(Southwestern College)* explained that he has made surveys of his ESL students to find out their goals in taking his classes and, at the end of the classes, their sense of whether or not they have achieved their goals. Using this information, he can 1) check the reasonableness of his students' expectations regarding their language gains over a semester's time, 2) evaluate how well the class meets students' expectations, and 3) consider possible modifications of the course. [For more information contact Dan Moody, (619) 421-6700.]

BRUCE STEVENSON *(Mira Costa College)* presented on the ways his English department is responding tothe unusual situation of having two geographically separate campuses—one in Mira Costa and the other in Oceanside. Committed to maintaining the unity of the department, he and others are working out scheduling, fulltime staff distribution, and the design of comparable teaching facilities. [For more information contact Bruce Stevenson, (619) 757-2121, ext. 220.]

GORDON DUKE *(San Diego City College)* spoke on the Connections Program SDCC has set up to encourage pre-1A students to commit to college-level work by offering them core composition, reading, and content-area classes. These students also receive teacher mentoring, group tutoring with a student tutor selected by the content-area instructor, free textbooks, and free tickets to the cultural events that the teachers organize for the group. The core instructors meet weekly and maintain a strong counseling liaison. [For more information contact Gordon Duke, (619) 230-2607.]

JOHN MARKLEY *San Diego City College)* explained A World of Ideas, a general education honors core curriculum articulated to transfer directly to San Diego State University, University of San Diego, and UC San Diego. Instructors teach the core students using a single theme each semester and even organize group trips to local museums, the Old Globe Theater, and similar San Diego attractions. John mentioned that far from drawing bright students away from other classes, this honors program has attracted many new students to the college. [For more information contact John Markley, (619) 230-2553.]

ENTITLED

"Judy . . . judicious . . . judeedelicious."
Thus, long ago, the boyfriend, a rabbi.

Ma-Pa had said, "Our little girl's
a true American, a real Judy Garland."
Ruby-shoed Yudka melted the witch,
unmasked the wizard, and sailed for home.

The sound of my name. At school each Sunday
the others were proud of the Lion of Judah
while I knew the whole place was named after me.
Then a real-live Dorothy crossed the elm-shaded street
to jump rope and catechize us
on Jesus, and Judas, the dirty Jew.

Looking down at my clean dress,
I dropped
the rope to sniff at myself.
Since that day my heart has learned pain.
And shocked eyes stare again and anew
but my ears rejoice at the rhyme of Yid-kid;
I rejoice at Judy the Jew.

Judy read as up she grew,
Yeats on Leda made her think,
"Did she put on his knowledge with his power
Before the indifferent beak could let her drop?"
The Greeks and the rest thought women weak
Without that plumed glory between their thighs.

But Biblical Judith knew herself.
Lovely, wealthy, wily, and smart,
holding these powers in her heart;
though weak of arm, with a faith that was strong
she slew Holofernes who would do her wrong.

In the nick of time
she wrote these words
about herself:

Body soft
and supple
Mind sharp
and subtle.

Judith.

by JUDITH KLINGER ROSE
Los Angeles Trade-Technical College

Author's Note: *I began writing this poem during a workshop at the first ECTYC "Revitalizing . . . Literature" Conference at Arrowhead in Spring, 1988. We were examining the chapter in Robert Scholes'* Textbook *on exploring our names.*

Part of the fun I have when I read this poem aloud to others is providing footnotes to the poem's literary allusions. The first is from L. Frank Baum, and the last five lines is an unpublished poem of mine called "Woman's Words." Between the two are echoes of e.e. cummings' "anyone lived in a pretty how town," W.B. Yeats' "Leda and the Swan," D.H. Lawrence's The Plumed Serpent, *the Biblical Apocrypha, the popular ballad "Frankie and Johnnie," and a line from Thoreau in which he wrote that he was "born in the most estimable place in all the world, and in the very nick of time."*

ENGLISH COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA TWO-YEAR COLLEGES ECCTYC

inside english

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INSIDE

inside

english

ECCTYC

Looks at

Teaching As A

Subversive Activity

An instructor urges us to quit deceiving ourselves and to recognize the writing process we teach for what it is: anything but revolutionary. Page 7

By celebrating stories and songs alive for our students, we can lead them to appreciate the stories and songs we value. Page 3

Oral reading improves students' grammar and writing: the testimonial of one seasoned teacher. Page 5

An English professor and a counselor/sociologist build self-esteem in high risk students in a College Survival English class; the result, a 90 percent success rate. Page 14

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RISK-TAKING AND WRITING

Disputatious Classrooms

by H. W. SENG
College of San Mateo,
DeAnza and Mission Colleges

It is timely, considering Justice William Brennan's recent descent from the Supreme Court bench and the ascension of David Souter, that we recall Justice William O. Douglas's famous opinion, *Terminiello v. Chicago, 337 U.S. 1 (1949)*, upholding the right of a suspended Catholic priest from Birmingham, Alabama, to preach racism and hate and excoriate Communists and their sympathizers at a public forum in Chicago. Douglas was particularly disturbed that the trial judge told the jury that the statutory words "breach of the peace" included speech that "stirs the public to anger, invites dispute, brings about a condition of unrest, or creates a disturbance." In writing for the majority Douglas wrote: "Speech is often provocative and challenging. It may strike at prejudices and preconceptions and have profound unsettling effects as it presses for acceptance of an idea."

These are, I submit, admirable guidelines for creating the unsettling atmospheres we need in our college writing classrooms. Look closely at the meaty words Douglas used: provocative, challenging, prejudices, preconceptions, profound, presses for acceptance of an idea. Are these not words we would like to write in the margins of our students' essays? The creation of such essays depends on our being attentive to barometric changes in our students' worlds and presenting those relevant issues for debate and exposition. Students may be tuning out not to our voices,

"NOT THE USUAL HOGWASH!"

but to the ideas and issues that our voices articulate, the cliché'd abstractions that students are at home with because they see such stale images flashed at them on their TV screens every night. Bland, perfectly poised newscasters domesticate and trivialize huge issues: abortion, drugs, capital punishment, war. As instructors dispensing topics, we follow suit and ask students to write about subjects they feel strongly about but can't think clearly and concretely about because their minds have already been made up—often *for* them. The embarrassingly direct concrete events that don't make the local or national news or are incompletely and imperfectly researched for biased presentation—the wrongful dismissal of the only high-ranking female member of a campus security force, death by hanging of a young black gay man in Concord, California, Jeb Bush's involvement in a multimillion-dollar Medicare scam in Florida—need to surface in our classroom discussions and writing assignments.

When searching for model essays to use in my classes, I now lean toward those that make me uncomfortable, that make me challenge my own stereotypes and prejudices. I select my Chinese-American student's essay describing his harassment and subsequent pummeling by another driver on his way to campus solely because he's "a Chink," or a later essay on his being forced to fight in the school cafeteria because his challenger boasted "he's never met a Chink who could or would fight." I select my Armenian-American student's essay describing his treatment at the hands of neighborhood toughs during the Iranian hostage crisis simply because he and his family had lived in Iran, or his remarkable interview-based essay about the Mormon wife who suffered abuse from her husband—with the blessing of the church elders. At times I read aloud from these unnerving essays; other times I project them onto a screen to illustrate errors in mechanics (all are attentive); frequently I duplicate them to inspire and challenge students who are oblivious of such disturbances in their midst. As long as students tell us, as mine have, that racism is a thing of the past, we need to encourage testimony from the courageous student writer sitting, often quietly, next to these sanguine spirits.

Out of discomfort comes change; we are educating citizens as well as teaching writing. If at the community-college level we consistently encounter students with provincial, uninformed frames of reference, we might conclude that high school instructors are teaching in classrooms sealed off from events, major and minor, that affect their and their students' lives. Rather than throwing up our hands and concluding it's too late to begin teaching critical thinking, we can instead bring into the classroom messy chunks of life, the controversial parts of it as well as the workaday, the parts the newspapers gloss over or sweeten or distort so as not to *invite dispute* or *create a disturbance.* How many of our students know that billions of their taxpayer dollars

are going to bail out savings and loan institutions whose unscrupulous directors (the President's other son Neil comes to mind) made questionable loan deals with friends who subsequently defaulted? Or that new federal taxes on gasoline and increases in Medicare payments will pay for these blatant abuses by respectable businessmen? As I mentioned above, we need to avoid topics that students have already made up their minds on, whether wisely or superficially, and invite discussion and debate on hidden agendas and covert worlds.

Recently an eight-member jury was selected to judge the innocence or guilt of Cincinnati's Contemporary Arts Center and its director on obscenity charges for exhibiting the Robert Mapplethorpe photographs. In defiance of the Supreme Court's ruling that in deciding the obscenity of an artist's work a jury must consider that work as a whole, the trial judge in this case directed the jury to consider the photographs individually. National Public Radio reported that not one of the

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Letters

ZUCKERMAN'S RIGHT

I like Marvin Zuckerman's suggestion that *i.e.* be printed in journal format—he's right about people being able to save back issues.

KAREN GROSZ
Santa Monica College

Yes, I would recommend changing *i.e.* to a journal-sized publication.

I enjoy *i.e.* and look forward to each issue, but the size makes it cumbersome to carry and to store, though I hope the creative format will not be destroyed.

NANCY DEUTSCH
Cypress College

inside english

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inside english welcomes articles, reviews, letters, and other writings of interest to instructors of English in two-year colleges. Submissions should be limited to no more than ten double-spaced typed pages. Although a detailed *Policy and Style Sheet* is available on request, in general follow *The Chicago Manual of Style*, *The MLA Style Manual*, and *The NCTE Guide for Non-Sexist Language*. The editor reserves the right to edit manuscripts so that their format and language conform to the style established in *inside english*.

Send poems to Robert Rippy, *inside english* Poetry Editor, San Bernardino Valley College, 701 So. Mt. Vernon Avenue, San Bernardino, CA 92403. Send all other submissions to Barbara Bilson Woodruff, *inside english* Editor, Santa Monica College, 1900 Pico Boulevard, Santa Monica, CA 90405. Manuscripts should be accompanied by a cover sheet that includes the author's name, address, and something about the author. Each manuscript should be titled and have the author's name and college under the title. Include a self-addressed stamped envelope.

Subscription rates for departments are $55 to $75 per year (depending on the number of issues required) and $30 dollars per year for commercial subscriptions. Remittance should be made payable to ECCTYC and sent to Richard McIntosh, ECCTYC Treasurer, Cypress College, 9200 Valley View, Cypress, CA 90630. Individual subscriptions include membership in ECCTYC and are $15 per year. Remittance should be made payable to ECCTYC and sent to Bill Decker, ECCTYC Membership Chair, College of the Sequoias, 915 Mooney Blvd., Visalia, CA 93277.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: The October 1990 *inside english* published a letter from Marvin Zuckerman, Chair, Los Angeles Community College District English Council, suggesting that *i.e.* change its format. By press time we had received only the two comments printed above in answer to our call for responses to Mr. Zuckerman's suggestion. However, we have heard verbally from several people who like what they call *i.e.*'s "unique" look and do not want it to change. What do you think? Voice your opinion on a postcard or in a note and send it to Barbara Bilson Woodruff, Editor, *inside english*, Santa Monica College, 1900 Pico Boulevard, Santa Monica, CA 90405.

Notices

CONFERENCES

3-6 January 1991. EIGHTH ANNUAL CCCC WINTER WORKSHOP: THE WRITING TEACHER IN CHANGING CONTEXTS—CHALLENGES FROM CLASSROOM PRACTICES, TECHNOLOGY, TESTING. Sheraton Sand Key Resort, Clearwater Beach, FL.

The program Chair is Andrea Lunsford, and workshop leaders include Peter Elbow (University of Massachusetts), Pat Belanoff (SUNY, Stony Brook), Dixie Goswami (Clemson University and Bread Loaf School of English, Middlebury College), Mary Helen Washington (University of Massachusetts), Peter Dow Adams (Essex Community College), and Lucy Maddox (Georgetown University).

Registration ($285) includes tuition, workshop materials, a welcoming social hour and banquet, and three luncheons. Hotel rates are $69/day, double occupancy, and air reservations can be made by calling (800) 336-0227.

For registration and information write CCCC Winter Workshop, 1111 Kenyon Rd., Urbana, IL 61801.

21-23 February 1991. PACIFIC NORTHWEST REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON TEACHING ENGLISH IN THE TWO-YEAR COLLEGE. Portland, OR.

For information contact Marilyn Connor, Chemetaka Community College, P.O. Box 14007, Salem, OR 97309.

21-23 February 1991. TWENTIETH-CENTURY LITERATURE CONFERENCE. University of Louisville, Louisville, KY.

The conference will feature papers on a variety of topics including studies of individual authors, genres and modes, histories and movements, and theoretical inquiries. Several literary figures and scholars are expected to participate, and

(Continued on Page 11)

How many times have we wearily walked into class, pulled out smudged and worn notes, and unenthusiastically lectured on the same books we lectured on last semester and many semesters before that? How many times have we carried back to our offices stacks of papers on the same topics we assigned and then read last semester and many semesters before that? When was the last time we rewrote our course outlines, our course objectives, our assignments? When was the last time we asked ourselves why we teach what we teach and why we teach it the way we do?

In this issue of *inside english* several of our colleagues reconsider curricula, classroom structures, and teaching strategies. One writer asks if there *is* anything new, or if we are seduced by an "illusion of progress." Two instructors assert that new techniques *do* exist and do provide students with the skills they need to become better students and more fully realized human beings. Another writer "talks back" to the author of a previous article, urging the efficacy of a "new" approach to teaching composition. All the writers have in common—with each other and with all contributors to *i.e.*—a passionate commitment to teaching and a concomitant commitment to carefully considering what they teach and how they teach it.

Several of *i.e.*'s readers have asked about the journal's manuscript format and style. If you are writing an article for *i.e.*, please request a style sheet. Briefly, we follow *The Chicago Manual of Style* for manuscript format and particulars, the MLA style for documentation, and the *NCTE Guidelines for Non-Sexist Language*. We ask that all manuscripts be double-spaced on bond paper and that they have a title, followed by the author's name and the college at which s/he teaches. Articles may be as short as two typed pages or as long as ten. Reviews are not limited to text books; any book that has influenced the reviewer in her/his capacity as an instructor—or has challenged or irritated him/her—is appropriate for review. Two new occasional columns—"Talk Back" and "In Other Words"—give writers the opportunity to respond to articles that appear in *inside english* or to express their opinion on any topic pertinent to our profession.

We at *inside english* hope you enjoy reading this issue and wish all of you a happy holiday season—and a restful, enjoyable few weeks' vacation.

BARBARA BILSON WOODRUFF
Santa Monica College

STRIKING FIRE IN OUR STUDENTS AND OURSELVES

Our Work in Story and Song

by JOHN LOVAS
DeAnza College

The following article is adapted from remarks presented at the annual liaison meeting of the English departments of San Jose State University and the surrounding community colleges, 16 April 1990.

Last March, I attended the CCCC meeting in Chicago held in the historic Palmer House. The first day of the conference dramatized one of the major

paradoxes of our profession. In the morning, I attended a session titled "Clarifying/ Untangling Connections between Process and Content." The session, a rather contrived debate among three panelists about the relation of content knowledge and process knowledge, foundered when they all agreed context was critical, but couldn't agree what it meant. In the discussion period, someone threw genres into the mix. The whole session suggested the blind men and the elephant, but in this case there was no elephant: not once in an hour and fifteen minutes was meaning or understanding mentioned. The whole session so lacked in particularity, in a sense of human significance, that I came away with virtually nothing to think about.

Now this is no polemic against theorizing. My reading of Robert Scholes' *Textual Power* (his effort to apply recent literary theories to teaching college English) and Gerald Graff's *Professing Literature* have stimulated a great deal of thinking on my part about the role of literary texts in our classrooms. [1] It turned out that Scholes was presenting that first afternoon and Graff was the respondent.

Describing the history of our profession from "Rhetoric to Literature to Textuality," Scholes argued that the study of English literature as we've known it for the past century was going the way of the study of Latin. In his response, Graff raised the issue of the conservative ascendancy in the popular debate on literacy, citing E. D. Hirsch, Allan Bloom, and William Bennett in particular. These issues were more engaging than the morning session, yet I was still rather irritated. Though I side with Scholes and Graff more often than with Hirsch or Bloom, I had the vague sense that the important parts of the elephant were still missing.

That evening I returned to the Palmer House. For the first time ever, Gwendolyn Brooks, Mike Royko, and Studs Terkel were reading together—a gathering of Chicago voices. The room filled and then overflowed. I had to sit on the floor with many others. One could feel the energy, the sense of anticipation, the prospect of participating at an important event. Brooks read first, with her energetic cadence, choosing mostly poems written by young people who had won awards in a poetry competition she sponsors as the poet laureate of Illinois. At the end she brought the crowd to its feet with a recitation of "We Real Cool." Royko had never read before in public (and it showed). Even so, his reading of pieces by Terkel and Nelson Algren celebrating Chicago and its people was affecting. As for his own work, he said, "I figure if I write it I don't have to read it." So Terkel read it. Studs concluded the evening by reading two Royko columns. The most powerful one, written in 1972, was Royko's recollection as a teenager attending a Cubs-Dodgers game at Wrigley Field, the first appearance of Jackie Robinson in Chicago. The stadium was full, half of the fans were black, a scene new to Chicago in the forties, and Royko put us in that time and place. Moved, this audience of theorizing, criticizing professors responded to all three writers with enthusiastic, even wild applause. I came away feeling I had, in some important way, participated in the life of Chicago and, by extension, America.

How to reconcile my day with my night? How do we approach the great literacy/ literature debate with people like Bloom and Hirsch proclaiming students are going to hell in a handbasket and people like Scholes and Graff implying the profession is going to hell in a different handbasket? OK, that's oversimplified. But I think we know that most American students simply don't know the traditions of their culture, that they haven't read widely or well. And despite our public hand wringing, as a profession we have become complacent—we put our energy into the bureaucracy and machinery of literacy (placement tests, basic writing classes, exit tests, holistic scoring, systems of prerequisites) but do little that strikes fire in the hearts or bellies of our students. The sense that we are at cross purposes, that either we read or we write, either we produce or we process, either we analyze or we textualize, has been very strong. I guess I want a sense of common ground as I consider the tensions inherent in those oppositions.

A few weeks ago I began my English 1C course (our third quarter of Freshman English) with Robert Fitzgerald's translation of *The Odyssey*. Fitzgerald renders the first line: "Sing in me, Muse, and through me tell the story . . . ." Song and story, story and song. Exactly! That's what we are about, I told myself—that's what our work has always been about. All cultures celebrate through story and song. Just as Homer celebrates the richness of life in Ancient Greece in singing the story of Odysseus, so Brooks and Royko and Terkel are singing the stories of the richness of life in Chicago and America. For all of us in the profession of English, here is both common ground and common cause.

This is our connection to our students: they celebrate their lives in story and song every day. Many of our students come from backgrounds that tell stories and sing songs we don't know (a colleague who teaches ESL found when she asked for students' favorite TV programs, about half mentioned titles from Chinese language television). Many of our students prefer stories and songs we don't want to know ("The Clash" on MTV; Freddie and Jason in the slasher movies). Our students do care about story and song, though they often do not understand their importance in the culture. In fact, most of them assume the stories and songs they value have absolutely no connection to the stories and songs we offer them. Let me illustrate from a student paper I received last quarter.

> The books I have read in the past were mostly meant for fun. My favorite authors were Heinlein, Harrison, Hitchcock, Clancey, and Asimov. When I looked at them in comparison to Hemingway, Leavitt, and Gilchrist, I saw a big difference. For the most part the writers that I had enjoyed were pretty entertaining, but didn't have anything of substantial importance incorporated in their stories.

Then, further on, this student describes how one story reached him:

> The idea was revealed to me by Ellen Gilchrist in her story "Rich." Through the whole story I could think of nothing else but wringing Helen's neck. The story was very entertaining; I enjoyed it very much until Helen was killed. The story made me stop and think about my strong desire to harm Helen. It made me reflect on how I would treat a child like her that was in my family. I spent a couple days reflecting on that story. That is what good writing is about. It got me involved, almost personally, emotionally. When the end came I could do nothing but sit and wonder how I would act in a situation like that.

Our common cause, what our philosophy should direct us to, is embodied in that student's experience as a reader. When we can acknowledge that others' stories and songs have value and substance, then we can all celebrate together the stories and songs that "get us involved, almost personally, emotionally." And we can talk together about how those stories and songs affect us. Homer tells us that, while enjoying the hospitality of King Alkinoos, Odysseus

> carved out a quarter from his chine of pork
> crisp with fat, and called the blind man's guide:
> "Herald! here, take this to Demodokos:
> let him feast and be merry, with my compliments.
> All men owe honor to the poets—honor and awe, for they are dearest to the Muse
> who puts upon their lips the ways of life.
> (Book VIII)

Who today "puts upon their lips the ways of life"? Brooks, Royko, and Terkel certainly do. What about the lyrics of Lou Reed, Tracy Chapman, Neil Peart? What about Berkeley Breathed, Gary Trudeau, and Matt Groening? Whom would you suggest? Whom would your students nominate?

Of course, we do more than celebrate the stories and songs of our culture. We recognize their moral force, their transforming power. So we must criticize our stories and songs. Here's the observation of a celebrated contemporary writer: "I refer to the aesthetic doctrine whose keystone is the cult of right-thinking mediocrity, bedded in hoary national self-satisfaction, guided by the principle that everything must be slick, trivial, and predigested, and culminating in that false optimism which puts the drabbest interpretation on the dictum that 'truth will prevail' " (18). Many of us might say that's a fair description of the culture of America promoted by both corporate and political leaders over the past decade and a half. Actually, they are the words of Vaclav Havel, writer, sent 8 April 1975 in his "Letter to Dr. Gustav Husak, General

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TALKING BACK . . .

A Response to Hawkins' "Notes from the Underground"

by MARGIE WHALEN
Mt. San Antonio College

Mark Hawkins' article "Notes from the Underground: A Traditionalist Polemic" (*inside english*, May 1990:1) gave a lot of us pleasure. One colleague of mine, trying to read it surreptitiously in a particularly tedious meeting, kept giving himself away by erupting in snorts of laughter. As he read it, giggling and wiping his eyes, we all wished we'd thought to bring it along. The article is funny and well-written: apoplectic wattles, indeed.

Hawkins not only entertains; he makes a number of good points. He is right to call us to task for arrogance; the "process generation" does sometimes err on the side of evangelical fervor, seeing those who don't hold our ideas as caricatures, grim and inevitable reincarnations of Simon Legree. And if we sometimes reduce the notion of students as writers to a kind of soft-headed "feel good" course, if we do indeed revel in what he calls "moist mutual reinforcement," then he is right to shake a "trembling finger" in our direction. We all need to consider and question those assumptions implicit in our teaching.

This leads me, of course, to the assumptions implicit in Hawkins' article. While I hope I'm not one of those earnest and smug instructors who would shove old Doddington out of his leather armchair, I do find some of Hawkins' assumptions troubling. Foremost is his sense that students are generally subject to a kind of "intellectual Legionnaire's Disease," able to produce independent and creative papers only when writing for the judgment of their benevolent instructors, uninhibited by the pack-like

demands for mediocrity of their peers. The converse seems to me to be true: students who write not only for their instructors but also for their peers, especially in multiple-draft situations, seem *more* willing to take rhetorical or stylistic or intellactual risks as they try to communicate rather than merely to perform. And while they do not write the exhaustive reviews of each other's papers that an instructor might write, they can, in fact, respond as curious and intelligent readers, noting what is not clear, where the writer might offer more details, where the writer has gotten off track—and where the writer has said something well. In learning to address those issues in their peers' papers, students learn to raise those questions about their own work.

Wrestling with the difficulties of language—their own language—in an effort to be clear strikes me as a valuable alternative (or addition) to the reading-as-genuflection approach in which we ask students to read only the work of polished, professional writers, where their central response is primarily awe. I would certainly not argue that "young people have experienced more geniune reality than epicene bookworms can ever find," but I do believe that they can learn to "analyze and improve their own papers" by 1) taking them seriously as acts of communication by writing for a wider audience and 2) seeing the problems—and the possibilities—in the drafts of their peers. Hawkins and I disagree about peer evaluations, I think, because we disagree about our students. Because they can be "banal and unreflective" in conversations about football, he thinks they will inevitably be banal and unreflective in peer evaluations and class discussions. I do not.

Because we disagree about our students, we disagree about our roles with them. Hawkins divides teachers into two camps—the doddering (but proud) Conservatives and the Arrogant Young Progressives. One study of teaching styles describes the differences within the profession instead as a continuum, with the poles of that continuum being "transmission" at one end and "interpretation" at the other:

> Transmission teachers believe that knowledge is objectively contained and divisible into public disciplines, which, via lectures and assigned readings, the teacher transmits directly to passive students. In contrast, interpretation teachers . . . define teaching as creating circumstances in which students use language to transact with curriculum material, which in turn means they are actively constructing knowledge in their own right (Parker 21-22).

Even the most rabid Arrogant Young Progressive is sometimes a transmission teacher. I am when I teach students how to use participial phrases or parallelism. But generally the transmission style does not work for me because it allows (even insists upon) student passivity: I lecture, they listen; I lead, they follow; I think critically, they take notes. In the very best of circumstances, the student may be entertained, even inspired. But my aim is to have students actively engaged, learning to think critically and write persuasively by doing so in the company of others—not by watching admiringly while I do so. This does not mean, I should emphasize, that I am grateful for any sign of sentient life; most process teachers, I would hope, are as committed in their classrooms as is Hawkins to the kind of academic rigor required of a college course. Yes, we know that our students' initial efforts to think critically and react independently will sometimes be halting, but

we believe that they can best develop skills by practice, not by passive observation.

My response to Hawkins' article, then, confirms a premise put forth in Perl and Wilson's three-year study of writing instruction when they say that "how teachers interpret what they see in front of them determines how they act and how they teach" (37). Hawkins and I see students differently, so we teach differently. Those differences will probably lead us to continued disagreement, with him bleating at me from his leather armchair while I cut out Calvin and Hobbes for my handouts. Still, I'm grateful for the questions he raises. I will indeed think carefully about my teaching assumptions because of the debate raised by his article. I hope he will, too.

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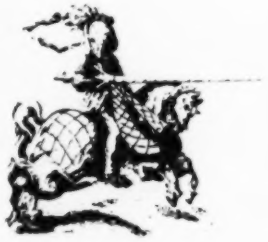
Margie Whalen teaches at Mt. San Antonio College, having come there recently from Foothill College where Mark Hawkins was her tenure chair and her friend. Despite her "progressive" views, he helped grant her tenure—and remains her friend.

MARK HAWKINS RESPONDS

Let us indeed, following the suggestion of my old pizza-comrade, Margie Whalen, discuss assumptions, for it is in these assumptions that I find my major irritation with her and the whole New Guard movement. It is not merely that they claim better methods, but that they assume higher virtue as well, and an almost evangelical sense of sacred truth that would be heresy to deny.

Harsh words? Consider first the positive side of Whalen's assumptions. She claims that *her* object (presumably in contrast to mine) is for her students to be "actively engaged"; she wants them to "think critically" and "write persuasively." How can one argue with that? She writes as though this were the crucial dividing line between us, between the New Guard and the Old Guard. It's not; teachers of all ages agree with this, obviously. But Whalen is not wasting our time with cliches; she has a less obvious, hidden trait of logic in mind: "My belief in the efficacy of peer-evaluation, for example," her real argument runs, "is based on my assumption that students should write engaged critical persuasive essays. If you don't accept peer evaluation it must be because you don't accept my assumption of these important humane values." I am going to be churlish enough to question this logic, to insist that the real issue is not originality versus non-originality or critical attitudes versus blind acceptance, but whether peer evaluation does actually lead to critical originality or rather to the recirculation of stale cliches, whether our students are at their most critical and original alone or in a public group. Whalen need not agree with my opinion on this question, but I wish she would at least admit that there is a question.

Now consider the other side, her negative assumptions. What she is opposed to, she



tells us quite forthrightly as though she expected argument, is the kind of class which promotes "student passivity" and "reading as genuflection," where the students' response is "primarily awe" or "watching admirably." I hope some readers scratched their heads when reading these passages. Who in the world is she talking about? Is this a fair description of the typical college class in geology, history, business etc.? Or is this her evaluation of a traditional 1A session in which the teacher leads the whole class in a discussion of an essay or short story? Or is this Whalen's description of teachers who don't believe in the things she believes in? We don't know for sure. (It can't be an attack on my own English classes

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TALKING AND LISTENING

Let's Hear It for Oral Reading

by JOSEPH COLLIGNON
Fullerton College, Retired

Most community-college students are highly oral. Their modes of thinking are not like those of highly literate groups; that is, they are not logical or objective or detached in their speech or writing. In their world things are black and white; they avoid the hypothetical or polysemous. Worse, they don't particularly like to read or write. In literature they dislike abstract poetry and prefer short stories with a clear purpose,

stories that are, well, edifying. They enjoy humor in a short story or novel—the broader and "grosser" the better—but black humor leaves them nervous or outright angry. One of my colleagues, speaking about remedial and sub-remedial groups, described his students' problem as "dissociation from the printed page." Walter Ong would probably have used the phrase "residual orality," a condition that exists between the primary oral society and a literate society.

The good news, of course, is that these students are talkers. They not only enjoy talking, they also enjoy listening to a good story. A lecture on the structure of a particular novel falls on deaf ears; a class read-aloud of a particularly good chapter enthralls them. Discussing the use of the noun clause as subject eludes them; reading sentences aloud with noun-clause subjects enables them eventually to use complex structures without necessarily being able to define what they are using. Their conversations with each other, both in and out of class, are lively and animated. Is it possible that they could read aloud in class in such an animated manner? It certainly is possible. Oral reading in remedial and regular composition classes in particular results in progress the instructor can *hear* and evaluate objectively—both in students' reading and their writing. In literature classes the results may be more difficult to evaluate objectively, but the results are there—in their pleasure at hearing the great lines of poetry and prose, in their better understanding of the great works of literature if we can accept Robert Frost's dictum that "the sound is the sense."

Let's begin with reading in, say, a remedial class in composition. Most of these students read aloud rather mechanically, sometimes haltingly, often missing marks of punctuation or reading them incorrectly. The liveliness of their conversations disappears; in its place, the drone of recitation. The problem: their dissociation from the printed page. The solution is, first of all, to get them to read in clusters of words. As long as they read word for word, their reading remains mechanical; they are unable to put any expression into what they read for the simple reason that a complex sentence appears to them one word at a time—with little or no notice taken of subordinate elements or interrupters. In other words, a complex sentence with a noun-clause subject beginning "What" is typically read as a question, not a statement. (To be fair, a student usually realizes midway through the sentence that what she is reading is not a question and attempts to change her voice to accommodate the period at the end of the sentence.)

That student would have no trouble telling her friend, "What makes things even worse is that my parents know about it"; the same sentence in a textbook can be a problem. Anyone reading such a sentence word for word will probably think question; anyone reading that sentence in clusters of words, four or five words in the cluster, knows that it is a statement—even without a context.

Those of us who teach may have gone through graduate school without ever having been taught to cluster words when reading. There was no need. We have been reading four or five words per fixation since grade school for the simple reason that we've enjoyed reading for as long as we can remember. But for many today, that is just not the case. So in an English class, without reading accelerators or tachistoscopes, students today must struggle to learn this simple trick. When they have learned to do so, the instructor will know: he can *hear* whether students understand what they are reading while they are reading; he will *see* that they are able to look up occasionally while reading without losing their place.

Once students can read aloud fairly competently, they are asked to put some feeling into their reading, to pretend that they are really trying to communicate important thoughts rather than reading a sentence from a text. That requires considerable persuasion since many community-college students are extremely reticent. But usually someone breaks the ice—often one of the better readers or, even more frequently, an ESL student—and the reading picks up an emotional level. Because all read-alouds are voluntary, no one feels the pressure that would inhibit an emotional response.

What about grammar? First of all, no one can read a sentence aloud or write a sentence without using grammar. Initially, no mention is made of grammar; everything is the sound of the sentence or paragraph being read. Only after students achieve some reading competence is grammar introduced—and then only as an explanation of an abstract concept already achieved by sound. For example, one of the sentences used to illustrate the punctuation of a sentence with a compound verb, "The audience did not share his views and were not very polite to him," has already been *heard*—and frequently—before the explanation of sentences with compound verbs is introduced. The reason for the grammatical explanation is that many students want to know why something is correct or incorrect. And though the grammatical explanation does little to enhance their reading and writing skills, it does lend a certain legitimacy to the method. A good sentence not only sounds better, it follows—almost always—the rules.

Teaching formal grammar to remedial students is something of an exercise in futility, not so much because those students are dull but because they do not respond, as do highly literate students, to abstractions about the language. Yet they can become competent readers and be introduced to sentence variety, rhythm patterns, simplicity, and complexity without the use of any paradigms. They simply read aloud sentence after sentence, paragraph after paragraph, essay after essay, short story after short story until it happens: their improved reading ability transfers to writing. Students feel lucky when their turn comes and the sentence reads: "I didn't give up"; very unlucky if the sentence reads: "His convictions that human beings can be explained with principles derived from rats and pigeons, that most behavior is determined by reward and punishment, that free will is an illusion and the 'inner man' a pre-scientific notion best discarded by psychologists are unshakable." When the subject is in the first line and the predicate four or five lines later, it takes a very competent reader to read the sentence effectively and, more important, to know what he or she has just read. How many sentences does it take before progress can be seen objectively on tests and subjectively hearing students read and seeing the results in their writing? It takes literally hundreds of sentences. But the results are worth it.

Though most students may never understand the grammar of an introductory infinitive phrase or a participial phrase, they quickly pick up the sound of such phrases. And when it comes to hearing the problem with a dangling modifier, that problem can be quickly resolved with hearing the correct grammar a number of times. The same is true of punctuation, spelling, even usage. Hearing and seeing the correct spelling at the same time improves the students' chances of putting the letters in correct order; hearing the sound of two closely related sentences without a conjunction improves their chances of using a semicolon correctly; hearing the sound of "between you and me" increases the possibility of their saying and writing "between you and me."

With this program in oral reading—about as basic as any writing program can be—students are offered a way to improve their writing skills based on their ability to hear the language, a program designed to complement—or even replace—the sound of language they hear at home, at school, and, possibly most importantly, from their TV sets and compact discs.

Just as the oral reading practices in this program proceed from sentences to paragraphs to total essays, so also do the essay assignments proceed from experiential and descriptive to more abstract topics. One of the early assignments, for example, asks the students to pick a particular place they recall from childhood (an orange grove, grandma's kitchen), describe that place and the people

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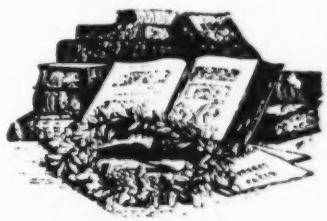


TEACHING LITERATURE

It does no good to tell her
to just kiss the damn frog. She's
grossed out by his strange smell,
his weird color, his funny bumps.
All she sees is ugly.

She's heard the cliché
about pain and gain but
she doesn't believe it.
Why should she?
She doesn't even believe
she's a princess.

You can
plead, cajole, bribe, even yell
in righteous anger. She will only
stare out over the pond
with that distant look in her eyes
and think what a goof you are
to get so worked up about such things.

It does no good at all to tell her
what awaits her: the tall
muscular hunk whose eyes
will set her afire, whose
rippling arms will carry her
wherever she wants to go.

She won't believe anything
you say about frogs
or anything else, not really,
not until she's kissed a few
on her own first.

by DAVID DENNY
De Anza College

TEXT FOR ANOTHER FRONTIER

by PHILLIP DAUGHTRY
Santa Monica College

Dreams and Inward Journeys (Harper & Row, 1990) by Marjorie Ford and Jon Ford strikes me as a perceptive textbook whose intent is to operate on a neglected frontier: the inner self.

The text's "fundamental working assumption" is "that writing is a process that includes the imagination and the inner self of the writer as well as logic, rhetoric and style" (xvii). Fair enough. It is common enough knowledge that writing asks of the self and of the imagination, yet my

experience is that the territory of the self and of the imagination seems a strange land to many of my students. I prefer to teach writing as a work of creating sensibility rather than as an obstacle course in rational thinking; consequently, I explored *Dreams and Inward Journeys* with an eye to recruiting a fresh ally in the battle against student indifference to personal exploration through writing.

It is my view that the work of creating and sustaining culture is a personal task initiated by the realization that making the best of oneself is a community responsibility. Cultivating the self is a process of cultivating a sensibility—a being whose collective senses function with focus, intention, sensitivity, and vision. in regard to the labor of being, an education can help, and regarding the use of language as a vehicle for education, it helps to know that language can open up one's inner life as well as facilitate "good communication skills" designed to help one "succeed in the real world."

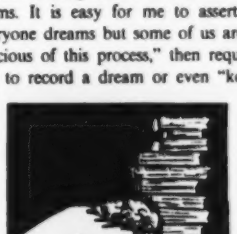
But despite these lofty intentions, I am still persuaded that estrangement from an inner life, indeed even a demonstrated refusal to confront the solitude of the self, identifies many of my students, who fear the "personal," perhaps revelatory, work of the inward struggle. However, I am convinced that the greatest resource a person has is his or her own life, an identity: to be familiar with oneself is to spend time with the *experience* of being oneself; anything less is estrangement, alienation. Writing can be a useful and revealing exercise of self-discovery, and the discussion and analysis of writing can furnish one with the tools to look and to dive deeper into the roses and ruins of existence.

Dreams and Inward Journeys consequently comes as a gutsy support system for teachers who are presently wondering if an English 1 class just might be beating up the wrong tree when it focuses solely upon rhetoric. As a book that compiles nine chapters of essays discussing the creative process, dreams, fantasies, obsessions, transformations, vision, social expectations, childhood memories, and various self-discoveries, *Dreams* might be a bit of a stretch for English 1 although I think one worth risking. But it is assuredly an excellent text for beginning creative writing classes and, in fact, useful for any course whose focus includes self-discovery and creativity.

I find the chapter on "Discovering Ourselves in Reading" particularly useful. As do all of the other chapters in the book, this one insists upon empowering the student with a critical faculty, in this case with well-chosen pieces by Northrop Frye and Virginia Woolf among others more notable for their diversity than their homogeneity. Such an emphasis upon a coherent theme, yet so well mixed, makes the text readable on its own terms, well outside the requirements of an English class. I find this gratifying, for I tend to grow rapidly bored with textbooks I would find hard pressed to read on a train or waiting for a dentist.

As is often the case, *Dreams* comes with a handy Instructor's Manual offering clever assignments and short-order synopses of the main text's contents. I am not the person to evaluate this aspect of the book, preferring as I do to ride mainstream with my students probably out of a conditioned sense that I am using a sort of sneaky professional version of Cliff Notes when I refer to such things as "Instructor's Manuals." However, I did glance through this one, and I am keeping it; I saw some very creative and innovative assignments in this workbook, and in addition to the authors' providing me with a vigorous new text, maybe they are breaking down my longheld resistance to receiving some professional help. Such are the advantages of inspiring new texts!

One element of *Dreams* I find challenging to apply is the focus upon dreams—dreams as a manifestation of one's life and also dreams as a part of being that one must in some way explore and in this case record. My experience so far has been that it is difficult for many students to encounter their dreams. It is easy for me to assert that "everyone dreams but some of us are not conscious of this process," then require a class to record a dream or even "keep a



dream journal," but results so far are mixed. I prefer to keep the dreamlife process as a part of the greater process of focusing upon oneself: . . . one's habits, one's day to day and finally moment by moment examination of one's being as this focus changes within the context of our collective discussion and sharing of various writing tasks lifted from the text. I do however make a positive fuss over any dream a student records and attempts to understand even if I don't read it out of respect for a sometimes expressed desire for privacy on a student's part.

I lived with Cree Indians as a boy in Canada; for many of these people my dreams were sacred gifts, . . . direct interventions on behalf of the spirit that offered balance and healing, direction and truth to my life. I celebrate Marjorie Ford and Jon Ford's work and feel that all such contributions to the creation of language and of self deserve use much more than even critical acclaim.

COURTING THE SILENT SHADOWS

by JANICE ALBERT
Las Positas College

> The waking have one world in common; sleepers have each a private world of his own.
> Heraclitus

There is no consensus about the function of schooling, especially higher education in the United States. It may be that Robert Maynard Hutchins and his friend Mortimer Adler were the last American educators to try to direct the streams of higher education into a single bed. Their experiment has gone the way of the Jarvic heart, whose performance was numbered in days.

Is college a haven for humanists, a theater for technocrats, or social warehousing for a growing, multicultural labor force? We educators don't know. Willing to impose only the most tentative system of values on the range of subjects to be studied, we offer students a feast of courses, requiring a certain number of units from each of the mental food groups; vegetarians and students on special diets must see a counselor before making substitutions.

Everyone must take at least one helping of English, although the function of English classes is as poorly defined as the purpose of education itself. We think that English classes must prepare students for assignments in other classes. Also, train students to frame an argument and express a point of view. Also, standardize the grammar and spelling habits of American youth. (Could we acculturate just a few of these immigrants along the way?) Also develop the student's research techniques for upper division classes. Also prepare for the subsequent literature class. Also prepare for situations outside of the class itself: civic responsibilities, such as writing letters to the editor, job-related responsibilities, such as reporting on sales or recording fire-prevention activities. And what about the student's relationship to his own psyche? Should we coach the student in journal writing and self-expression?

Distracted by an impossible number of end-products which require different degrees of sophistication and, above all, time and patience, the English teacher asks, "Aren't there a few basics that would carry the student through a variety of assignments? Can I lay a foundation that will support upper division work, employment demands, and individual growth?" I think this is where the "writing process" approach comes from. In a more coherent society, we would concentrate on the end product. We might check student writing for accuracy and logic in subject matter that was deemed collegiate. When Heraclitus said he thought we had one world in common, he was speaking of ancient Greece, not contemporary America where no subject—neither the flag nor motherhood nor apple pie—enjoys universal assent.

In a country where diversity reigns, the world view of the individual becomes the syllabus. In their book, *Dreams and Inward Journeys*, Marjorie and Jon Ford offer a number of assignments designed to develop the unconscious, private worlds of students. From the beginning, students are urged to keep a dream journal: writing is described as a process of self-discovery (xxii). Students read poetry, fairy tales, and short stories along with nonfiction in the more than sixty selections that follow. Writing of fellow students is included, essays in response to the same assignments made in the text. There is a heavy emphasis, for a freshman reader, on psychological points of view.

Psychological insight informs the chapter on argument. The authors develop a theory of "dialogic" argument: writing a dialogue between two points of view ("two aspects of the writer's self") in order to arrive at a synthesis.

> In dialogic argument, a conscious effort is made to bring together seemingly irreconcilable viewpoints in order to arrive at a type of synthesis of opposing perspectives that will

> allow the reader and his or her audience to learn more about themselves and to reach a closer relationship with one another's ideas. (404)

For some instructors, especially creative writing teachers, this book will seem an answer to a prayer. It values introspection. It addresses women's fears of speaking out. It does not stand on the threatening premise that there's a big world out there and both Dick and Jane had better get cracking if they want a place in it.

To the academician, the hopelessly left-brained intellectual, this book will be useless, even dangerous. I see him addressing the Fords with the words of Shakespeare:

> [You] talk of dreams
> Which are the children of an idle brain
> Begot of nothing but vain fantasy.

I prefer the words of Montaigne: "Dreams are faithful interpreters of our inclinations; but there is art required to sort and understand them." That art is, I think, the proper subject matter of English composition. The ability to transform the personal into the more nearly universal is the heart

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THE ILLUSION OF PROGRESS

Where Are We Going? Where Have We Been?

by MIKE GUISTA
Allan Hancock College

Making progress is something Americans feel they *must* do. It's immoral not to. So quite often, in order to relieve the tension that mounts from feelings of failure, we tell ourselves we've made progress when in fact we haven't. Composition theorists and programs—as well as the journals (nearly all) supporting these theorists/programs—claim substantial progress has been made in the last two decades. But what do we now know about writing that we didn't know in 1940 or 1950?

When we write, we go through a process.

1) We all knew writing was a process by the time we were six or seven, sitting in the back row of class tugging at our hair and changing the word "a" to "the" for reasons we could only intuit. 2) Seldom do two of us go through the same process, so there's no process that can be taught. 3) If writing were not a process, the eraser would never have been invented. 4) The eraser was not invented by a Composition theorist.

We write to an audience.

1) We all knew about audience the first time we asked a parent if we could stay up late and then turned to the other parent with the same question. 2) Whenever our audience is larger than one, we won't please everyone.

Everyone who writes is a writer.

1) Come on. Get out of here. Really? 2) Everyone who shoots baskets is a basketball player, but no one—no one—would ever tell me I'm a good basketball player. And I never will be, even if I practice twelve hours a day. 3) Though we aspire to help them write better, almost none of our students will be writers in the ordinary sense of the word "writer." Neither will we.

Writing is judged differently by different discourse communities; the quality of writing is thus relative to its judges.

1) Discourse community theory is for the most part a fancy way of talking about audience. 2) Good writing is more than learning the jargon of a particular community; it involves an attention to sounds and shapes and patterns of language that transcend such narrow definitions. 3) Some very good writers finish, on some days, one sentence they decide worth keeping. Guess what? They really do write good sentences, even if some discourse communities don't notice. That's because 4) Some discourse communities know a lot less about writing than others. Some discourse communities know a lot less about everything than others. They even know less about their discourse communities than others do. 5) Even if we don't know the language of all discourse communities (who does?), it is all right to judge some writing inferior and, in fact, we cannot escape judging. Every morning I judge whether or not to get out of bed, and, as trivial as it might seem, this decision has dramatic consequences for me as well as others. 6) Something that sets apart English teachers from other "teaching communities" is that we spend an incredible amount of time practicing the judgment of writing. Our judgments as a group are very important (of course, our abilities to judge perceptively vary considerably from person to person within our group).

Writing is a cognitive act.

1) You mean some people think when they write? What did teachers believe before somebody wrote down this milestone in writing theory? 2) Using the word "cognitive" explains or describes nothing more than "thinking is involved." Though cognitive psychologists are trying very hard to understand more about cognitive processes, the evidence for their reaching new and important conclusions is not yet in.

Writing often involves feelings.

1) You mean I might care about what I say?

Students can discover about themselves and their cultures when they write.

1) Yes. But students can't always recognize what is revealed, and one of our jobs as teachers is to bring what's hidden to the surface. 2) This is an act that necessarily involves judgment.

I could go on Compbashing, but that's not the end I seek, only the means. The end I seek is an honest exchange. We must continue to be hard on ourselves. Educational reform has necessarily always been subversive, i.e., against the grain of thought at the time. Educational reformers have found it necessary—before laying a foundation—to study educational systems (and the cultures they arise from) from an ironic distance, to dissect and criticize every important assumption.

Certainly, there's little subversion going on in Composition right now. Supporting equal rights in the classroom, the peace movement, ecology, animals, the discovery process, diverse communities, the cognitive-affective dimensions, active learning; rejecting corrections of grammar and punctuation, the teacher's authority, lecturing, evaluation—each of these has become so much a part of the mainstream of education that the absolute validity of any of them is rarely questioned. Rather, it is implied that if you do question them perhaps you aren't such a caring teacher after all.

We all know that to question the status quo is subversive and therefore job-threatening, so few of us do it. But to go along with whatever's fashionable without a flinch is an abnegation of the responsibility that we are bound, as teachers, to carry.

Michael Guista has taught at five community colleges, two UCs, one Cal State, and one private university, and has been published in literary and scholarly journals.

STRIKING FIRE

(Continued from Page 3)

Secretary of the Czechoslovak Communist Party." Those words were part of the reason Havel spent more than five years in prison; they are also part of the reason he is now the president of his country. Havel's insistence on the moral responsibility of the individual reminds each of us that our singers and storytellers not only convey tradition, they also are the conscience of culture.

> In other words, to accept the idea of collective guilt and collective responsibility means to intentionally or unintentionally weaken individual guilt and responsibility. And that is very dangerous. Just think back awhile to how many of us, until very recently, were stripping ourselves of individual responsibility by referring to the fact that that is just the way we Czechs are, and we will never be any different. This type of thinking is the inconspicuous germ of moral nihilism.
>
> (Havel, "Return of Germany" 57)

I have taken my role here to be something of a provocateur, to stimulate conversations about our work—its purpose and focus. And in simple terms, this is our work: story and song, celebrating and criticizing. What I propose is a curriculum that brings literary tradition into contact with the texts our students already value. How should we approach literature for non-majors? In all of our general education courses, both freshman English and those that meet humanities or literature breadth requirements, we should celebrate the stories and songs that engage our students personally and emotionally. We need to open ourselves to the stories and songs that bring them meaning and then show them how they can grow and extend the meanings of their lives by reading the stories and singing the songs that we have learned to value. If we do our job well, they will come away valuing poets and writers, honoring their role in telling "the ways of life." As for our majors, not only do we need to engage them in works that are historically, aesthetically, and socially important, but we must encourage them in the role of critic, one who will always reject the "cult of right-thinking mediocrity." Finally, for ourselves, we need to manifest the passion for story and song that brought us to this work.

NOTE

[1] Let me illustrate briefly. Using Scholes' arguments against traditional freshman readers—they exaggerate the power imbalance between teacher and student—I've experimented with collections by single authors. For instance, in the second term of Freshman English, I juxtapose Ernest Hemingway's *in our time*, David Leavitt's *Family Dancing*, Ellen Gilchrist's *In the Land of Dreamy Dreams*, and Al Young's *Kinds of Blue*. Taking up Graff's idea that we invite students into our debates about literacy and literature, I assign Allan Bloom's chapter on "Music" (his polemic about the corrupting influence of rock and roll) as well as Al Young's essays on The Angels' "My Boyfriend's Back," James Brown's "Cold Sweat," and Janis Joplin's "Mercedes Benz." Then, I play all three recordings in class, which usually leads to rather lively discussions of Bloom's arguments.

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John Lovas teaches English at De Anza College and has just co-authored (with Thomas W. Fryer, Jr., Chancellor, Foothill-De Anza Community College District) Leadership in Governance: Creating Conditions for Successful Decision-Making in Community Colleges, *forthcoming from Jossey-Bass in February 1991. He serves as co-director of ECCTYC's Region III (San Francisco South Bay/Monterey).*

REVIEWS

(Continued from Page 6)

of communication. This is where the English teacher can make a contribution to society's development: by weaning young people away from the delusion, nurtured by television, that any random thought of their own is intrinsically fascinating, and by cultivating in the student a sense of relationship to the outer world—the reader, the group, the future.

□ Ford, Marjorie and Jon Ford. *Dreams and Inward Journeys: A Reader For Writers.* New York: Harper and Row, 1989.

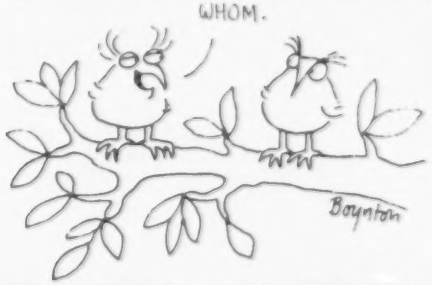
Janice Albert teaches English at Las Positas College in Livermore, California. She has headed a Writing Across the Curriculum program and now coordinates the English X program, a lab-based reading and writing program that includes both developmental and transfer-level English instruction. In her work as a free-lance writer, she has annotated the plays of Shakespeare in literature texts published by Macmillan and Scribners. For fun, she submits travel articles to local newspapers. Her work-in-progress is a freshman composition text for Mayfield Publishing Company, Mountain View, California.

KEEPING IT SIMPLE

by DEE FOSTER and BRIAN TOBIN
Lassen College

Our initial rationale for adopting the modestly-priced *English Simplified* for composition courses was to save our students a few bucks. Given the wildly inflated cost of texts, any savings to the students might help them to stay in school. This slim, unintimidating, binder-sized pamphlet lulls students into the calm faith that anything that fits into such a compact form cannot be especially tricky to master. It was, of course, not enough that the book be relatively inexpensive. Students need reliable sources, teachers need solid anchors, and good grammar and syntax are fundamental to effective written communications, so the text needed to work. *English Simplified* does.

This simple, easy-to-read text develops grammar, punctuation, mechanics, spelling, usage, and related stylistic and documentary points clearly and concisely. The indexing, however, is arcane and about as easy to follow as the writing on the Rosetta Stone.



Gs and Ps and Bs and Ss mate with dashes and numbers in such a confusing manner that students and instructors quickly resort to thumbing through the pages for the correct reference. The conveniently located Reference Chart on the back cover seems intended to compensate for the irritating index, but a tortuous organization ("Isn't 'B' before 'G'?" the students ask) causes confusion even with this simple, otherwise logical, topical index. Once the topic is found, however, this text rarely fails to answer the question in a simple and effective way. Simplicity and effectiveness, however, must be inclusive.

The great virtue and departure point for this work, simplification, need not be abandoned to fulfill the academic expectations of this text, but some instructors may be uncomfortable with the brief but tantalizing sections on writing effective sentences and on paragraphing. They might wish for further amplification on those points. Perhaps a slight expansion of the text might meet this need without violating its basic integrity.

Withal, it is a remarkable condensation. Beginning with the structure of the simple sentence and progressing through parts of speech, the work makes all the correct points about grammar, punctuates those points by way of timely examples, and points out common misuses. For example, it is instructive to know the principal parts of a verb in order to employ the six tenses (all listed and fully explained: 4, G-4, 3-A and B), but it is essential to understand the passive voice and avoid its needless use (5,G-4, 4B).* It is also instructive to know the difference between *like* and *as* (U,32), but it is essential to distinguish between *censor* and *censure* (U,30). Equally instructive is the clear, forceful prose with which this work defines concepts. Take, for example, the explanation of the semicolon:

> The semicolon signals a greater break in thought than the comma but a lesser break than the period. It is, however, closer to a period than to a comma in most of its uses and is often interchangeable with the period. The semicolon often gives your writing a formal tone, as the following examples suggest (17,P-5).

This definition wastes neither words nor punctuation in making the crucial distinctions among semicolon, comma, and period. Indeed it does a better job of clarifying such concepts than many so-called comprehensive grammars, which tend to be filled with repetitive examples. Repetition of key words and phrases as transitional devices are, however, not neglected.

A final, clinching section, "Beyond the Sentence," discusses paragraphing, outlining, and documentation. It defines the thesis statement and directs organization of a paper according to both MLA and APA style.

Texts seldom make riveting reading, but to be useful they must be accurate and concise in presenting the appropriate reference material. This text succeeds in helping students learn composition through the clear presentation of a foundation of solid grammar, punctuation, mechanics, spelling, usage, and stylistic techniques. It succeeds because it keeps it simple.

* Note the previous remarks about indexing.

□ Ellsworth, Blanche. *English Simplified.* Ed. John A. Higgins. 6th ed. San Francisco: Harper, 1990. 40 pages. $7.95

TO COPY AND CREATE

by ELAINE BENDER
Pasadena City College, El Camino College

For Leo Rockas' *A Creative Copybook*, the cover tells the story. An artist works in a flower-spattered meadow; a grove of trees begins in the middle distance and spreads and thickens in the background. We see the artist's painting—the meadow and the grove. The artist copies what is seen and creates a new work of art.

In each lesson of *A Creative Copybook*, students make an exact copy of a brief passage. Then the "transform" section of the lesson explains the grammatical principle (*e.g.* the present tense; pronouns; from first to third person; agreement between subjects and verbs; compound sentences). The principles are further elucidated by "The Guide" at the back of the text, a brief list of basic rules of grammar and punctuation. Students "tranform" the passage by rewriting it. (Change past to present; change first person to third; change singular to plural; combine sentences using coordinating conjunctions).

Next, imitations of the passage are written by retaining the "structure of the sentences and paragraphs of the original," but changing names, words, and phrases at will. Hints and cues suggest ways to do this: "Imagine a similar situation in which one person is visiting others on the day after a major holiday" (63). In the final section, students create. A paragraph by the same author as the copy passage is presented, and students are asked to continue and complete it. Questions about specific details in the passage provide stimuli for this response. In some instances, students are asked to include examples of the grammatical principle of the lesson in their creations. The text's first lesson provides sample responses by students to imitate and create exercises, which should help to prevent intimidation when first attempting these tasks.

Each chapter also provides a practive exercise involving filling in blanks from choices provided. There are no "wrong" choices, but there is more than one possible response for these items.

Designed for "inexperienced college writers, including native speakers of English and international students" (xvi), the text covers many skills simultaneously. While teaching grammatical principles, it improves vocabulary. Definitions of idioms in the copy passage with which students may be unfamiliar are provided. The practice sections require vocabulary choices. For example, in a lesson on infinitives, students choose whether "to put," "to dump," or "to discard" coffee grounds in a sink drain. The imitation section requires finding correlative expressions for the substance of the original.

Because of the variety of passages, students are exposed to rhetorical modes. Although many of the passages are narrative, there are examples of process (Ernesto Galarza on proper manners in the barrio), causal reasoning (E. B. White on railroads), and definition (E. M. Forster on tolerance). The selections are so interesting and well chosen that it's hard to resist listing more. They range from Aesop, Roger Angell, and Maya Angelou through Grimm, Maxine Hong Kingston, and Plato to Lewis Thomas, Studs Terkel, and Mark Twain.

There's nothing new about the theory of imitation; commonplace books, writers' journals, and art students' life classes are part of an artist's training. Composition courses rely on the tradition of imitation by using samples of and practice in rhetorical modes. But this text goes beyond using writings as models. It frees students from the fear of the blank page and permits them to progress from copies of excellence to imitating its mechanics and creating it themselves.

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□ Rockas, Leo. *A Creative Copybook.* Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath & Company, 1989. 278+ pages. $15.00.

Elaine Bender, who is not a creative artist, was so enchanted by this text that she did many of the exercises for the fun of it.

inside english DEADLINES

Manuscripts received after the deadline for a given issue will be considered for the next appropriate issue.

MARCH 1991 issue
Writing at All Levels
15 January 1991

MAY 1991 issue
The English Classroom of the 90s
15 March 1991

DECONSTRUCTION AND DEMOGRAPHICS

"The Center Cannot Hold" — Or Can It?

by PHYLLIS MAEL
Chair, Ethnic and Gender Studies Alliance, UCLA CAIP/Pasadena City College

Two forces converged in the late 1980s to revolutionize the teaching and learning of literature in California community colleges: deconstruction and demographics. Deconstruction, broadly defined, is a critical approach to academic disciplines, which enables one to challenge the "canon," current curriculum design, textbook publishing practices, traditional techniques, and many other "givens" that have gone unquestioned too long. Aiding in this challenge has been the shift in demographics in our state. As minorities become the "new majority," concerned faculty seek materials and teaching practices that more clearly address the needs of a diverse student body.

In response to the need for a re-vision of what and how we teach, the UCLA Center for Academic Interinstitutional Programs (CAIP) created an Ethnic and Gender Studies Alliance in January 1990. Discipline-based alliances (e.g., Foreign Languages, History and Social Sciences) that offer programs addressing specific faculty-development needs of community college faculty have existed at CAIP for several years. However, the changes in our student populations and the concomitant questioning of what we have been teaching and how we have been teaching it led to the perceived need for a new alliance—one that would address the challenges to both content and form facing all disciplines in the nineties.

In March 1990, the new alliance held its first advisory board meeting at which faculty indicated the need for programs addressing the following issues:

1. Teaching canonical works/figures/historical periods from a gender/ethnic perspective
2. Revising pedagogy, e.g., learning anti-bias, pro-diversity strategies
3. Integrating material by women and minorities into the curriculum
4. Helping colleagues who see no reason to change or who resist change
5. Discovering successful models for curriculum transformation
6. Discovering resources for diversifying the curriculum (bibliographies, filmographies, journals, sample syllabi, etc.)
7. Helping administrators see the need for change and suggesting institutional strategies for change
8. Finding funding resources—public and private grants, state and local funds.

The first program of the alliance was 22 May 1990. Entitled "Ethnic and Gender Perspectives in Literature," it featured presentations by Dr. Richard Yarborough (English Department, UCLA), Jean Toh (English Department, John Muir High School), and Dr. Phyllis Mael (English Department, Pasadena City College). Yarborough's talk, "Re-Viewing American Classics," suggested ways in which the perspective of race could shed new light on a canonical work such as *Huckleberry Finn*. Yarborough noted that Jim's story was not addressed when he studied the novel in high school, and he suggested several strategies for helping students to hear Jim's story. One was to balance the Twain novel with a work by an African-American writer. Another suggestion was to use a historical approach, *e.g.*, provide information on slavery and the popular culture of the time (minstrel shows, Uncle Remus, etc.). One could also look at how race functions in the text and in the classroom. For example, Yarborough pointed out, students rarely address the term "nigger" although probably they are all thinking about it.

Toh discussed another strategy—pairing a canonical work, *The Scarlet Letter*, with a work by a minority woman, Kingston's *Woman Warrior*. She pointed out that students not only learn about another culture, but also enhance their understanding of the "core" work through the perspective of that other culture.

Mael suggested beginning class with a "marginal" work, a short story by an Asian-American woman. This strategy can lead to new questions, provide valuable insight into the lives of people who for too long have been denied a place in our classrooms, and redefine what constitutes literature and works of literary value.

The second program of the Ethnic and Gender Studies Alliance, in October 1990, featured Dr. Joseph Graves, Jr. (Ecology and Evolutionary Biology Department, UC Irvine) speaking on "Racism and Science." Graves raised issues of relevance for all faculty. He traced the history of biological determinism, the power of racist ideology and its dangerous effects. Racist ideology not only leads to bad science but also undermines the self-esteem of minority students and prevents them from succeeding in the academy. He emphasized the need to teach our students to think critically, challenge received notions, and pursue new modes of inquiry.

One can easily apply Graves' views to the teaching of literature. Racist notions are, in part, responsible for a Eurocentric literary canon that defines what is worth reading and teaching as white, male, and European. This leads to "bad literature" because our view of what constitutes literature is too narrowly defined. Deconstruction empowers faculty and students to challenge this narrow view of literature and enlarge our perspectives by including works by women and people of color. This inclusion of works by "marginal" writers is leading to a redefinition of what constitutes a work of literary value.

To those of our colleagues who fear, like the speaker in Yeats' "The Second Coming," that "anarchy is loosed upon the world" and "the centre cannot hold," we offer this consolation: The centre is merely being redefined to more closely mirror the world in which we and our students live. It will not prevent the falcon from hearing the falconer, but will, in addition, enable the falconer to hear the falcon. We will not lose Huck's voice but will gain Jim's voice—and, consequently, begin to teach a literature that is more inclusive, more diverse, and richer than anything we could have imagined.

For information on future programs of the Ethnic and Gender Studies Alliance, call (213) 825-7749.

Phyllis Mael, a professor in the English Department at Pasadena City College, is the 1990 UCLA Community College Scholar for the CAIP Ethnic and Gender Studies Alliance. As a Visiting Scholar (1989) at the UCLA Center for the Study of Women, she edited Women and the Humanities: A Resource Book for Curriculum Integration.

TALKING AND LISTENING

(Continued from Page 5)

associated with it, and explain why they attach such importance to that memory. Later in the semester, they will be given a sociologist's definition and example of alienation. The students will be asked to respond to the author's definition; that is, to offer their own examples to illustrate and validate—or to deny, of course—the sociologist's concept. The principle behind an oral reading approach to writing is not to keep these students permanently away from the abstractions that highly literate students can handle with ease, but ultimately, to bring them to the point where they can handle complexity in speech and writing and the abstractions that govern not only English classes but every academic course that students take.

The study of literature in a remedial English class—if indeed literature is included—is limited by the community-college student's difficulty with abstraction. But here again oral reading as a technique can be extremely helpful. Let me illustrate with my own experiences.

The short story for the class hour is "Miss Temptation" from Kurt Vonnegut's *Welcome to the Monkey House*. The students have been assigned a page or more to read aloud; they are supposed to "practice their part" before coming to class. If they do well, the rest of the students are free simply to enjoy the story, completely unaware that they are learning new words, unusual sentence constructions, and punctuation techniques while simply listening to the readers. If the readers do particularly well, their classmates will laugh aloud at the funny parts, gasp at things unusual. Then it's time for the discussion. There's the rub.

After a few leading questions, getting nowhere, a student (male) will say something like this: "Any girl that dresses and acts like Suzanne deserves to be told off." Silence, but much smiling and body-language approval from the rest of the (male) students. Then another (female) says: "A

guy doesn't have any right to tell a girl how she ought to dress or act." There is appreciable (female) approval. Is it disappointing that very few of the students are willing to discuss Vonnegut's point in writing this simple story: that he strongly suggests that the sexual repression of the Puritan era is still very much in evidence today? Yes, it is. It is equally disappointing that so few students writing about the short story are

(Continued on Page 15)

$ACRAMENTO $CENE

Some Frustrations But Mostly Satisfactions

by GORDON TAYLOR
Yuba College

To those who were sorry (I'm sure there must be at least a dozen) that *Sacramento Scene* did not appear in October, I must apologize. The reason is very simple: I missed the deadline. Time and chance happeneth to us all, it seems. I offer, here, a revised version of the information and commentary in the original.

Sometimes fads pass for rituals and rituals change often enough to pass for fads. The Legislature seems to have both—sometimes they are separate and different, and sometimes they are the same and identical. Rituals or fads, they justify what the Legislature perceives are the *Important Issues* that require new bills and new laws; they are the way the Legislature carries out its business. Most recently, we were presented with the Ritual of the End of the Legislative Session. The Legislature's session lasts two years, and this was the end of the second year. Anything not completed has to be forgotten or reintroduced when the new Legislature begins its existence in late December. A major part of this ritual involves passing hundreds of bills that have been kicking around the Capitol for the past two years, and, suddenly, good heavens, we have only two days left, and we have to get all these bills out of the way. So our elected officials spend twenty-four hour sessions passing (mostly) a bill every few seconds. Most people, including our legislators, often do not know what they have wrought—benefits, damages, other—for a long time. But, much to the relief of our legislators, they finished their business by the constitutional deadline. They could then begin (?) their campaigning for the fall elections even as they, mostly Democrats as it seemed, were convoking the lobbyists for breakfasts and such at $2500 a plate and announcing in great, loud, somewhat indignant voices, that these little tetes-a-tete had nothing to do with the bills they were, seriously, of course, considering in their chambers. These sessions had been planned for some time, and it was, of course, pure coincidence that the two events took place at the same time. It seems odd, at least to me, that our guardians and benefactors in the Legislature can spare the time from closing down the legislative session to spend with their friendly lobbyists; but then, as my wife tells me, "I am only a boy" in matters of this kind.

The major annual ritual, the Construction of the Budget (see *i.e.* March 1990) starts in January when the Governor submits his proposal and ends—supposedly—in June when the Legislature produces its version of the budget and passes it on to the Governor for him to review, to veto a few lines, and to sign. Probably the most frustrating aspect of this summer's Ritual of the Budget was that this time it was more of a debacle. The Legislature and the Governor could not agree, and the dispute went on until well past the middle of July partly because the May Revise, as it is called, indicated that revenues for the coming year would be $3.6 billion short of January's projections. The Legislature and the Governor bickered over raising taxes (the Legislature) and reducing expenditures (the Governor). Finally, they reached some sort of odd compromise; on 28 July (the constitutional deadline is 30 June) the Legislature passed the budget and sent it on to the Governor who made some changes and signed it. The universities and the K-12 system as well as a few other of the state's agencies were cut back, many fees were increased, but, for some reason, the community colleges (CCs) came through relatively unscathed.

Increased:

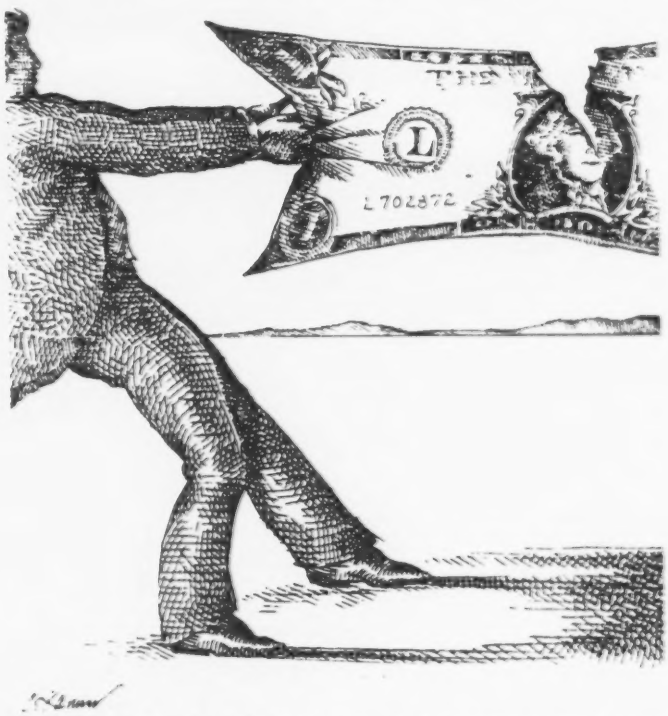
The CCs received their 4.66 percent for the COLA (cost of living allowance) for the general apportionment and the categorical programs; 2.43 percent in ADA payments for general apportionment and matriculation; and statutory equalization funds distributed using the original formula specified in SB 851; staff diversity funds doubled to $2 million; $1 million for economic development; $375,000 for pilot projects for the accountability model; and $5 million to pay for ADA above the cap in the GAIN program.

Maintained at the same level:

ADA funds of $5 million for basic skills, not included in the district's base revenue; staff development money at $5 million (certainly one source the Governor could have easily cut); $3 million for some kind of planning about hazardous materials; $5 million for the removal of same.

Decreased:

The money for enrollments over the cap reduced by the Governor from $13.2 million to $4.66 million; deferred maintenance from $15 million to $8.7 million with districts still obligated to match these funds dollar for dollar.



The most agreeable surprise to come out of the whole process was $70 million to fund Phase II of the reforms written into AB 1725, the famous bill to reform the CCs. $61.3 million is available now, which includes $4.4 million for transfer centers and agreements; and the Governor has set aside $8.4 million to be appropriated by special legislation in the future. The second phase sets in motion three more (in addition to the changes wrought by Phase I) important and significant changes in the way we in the CCs do business; these will take effect 1 July 1991:

1) We need to evaluate each other once every three years instead of the current two, but the process has certain specifications written into it.

2) New teachers will be on probation for four years before they get tenure and will be subject to more rigid evaluations and will more easily be fired than under the old system. The faculty is also given more of a say in who will be granted tenure. FACCC and The Academic Senate sponsored a workshop on 15 November 1990 on how to meet these new responsibilities.

3) The way we are funded will change as well: for the next year, at least, you will be hearing a lot about Program Based Funding (PBF) in which programs—*e.g.* instruction, student services, instructional services (libraries and such), institutional support (management and administration and such), and maintenance—will be paid for rather than funding colleges through ADA. See your FACCC group for the complex details of this new system. Larry Toy, a former president of FACCC, has worked up presentations that are clear and easily understood.

In the last days, before it adjourned, the Legislature considered a package of bills—sponsored by Gary Hart (Santa Barbara), Tom Hayden (Santa Monica), and John Vasconcellos (San Jose)—intended to improve higher education in California by revising in some instances and re-enforcing in others the State's Master Plan for Higher Education.

1) **SB 507: Vetoed:** The University of California (UC) and the California State University (CSU) would have been required to maintain a statutory ratio of lower division students to upper division, 40 percent to 60 percent. This arrangement would have provided plenty of space for students wishing to transfer from the CCs to the universities and thus be an incentive for more students to attend the CCs in the first place. The CCs would have had to set up transfer centers to advise students on the requirements of the upper schools and how to apply and to establish transfer agreements with various campuses of both UC and CSU. (See Phase II funding above.)

2) **Most of what follows was vetoed:** bills that would have required 1) that our colleges and universities hire more minority faculty members, 2) that financial aid to students be increased, 3) that we emphasize the quality of teaching and 4) monitor the achievement of students better. The Governor vetoed these bills for reasons that are not exactly clear to those who are in a position to understand. One interpretation is that he owes nothing to the CC's constituency and was, for some reason or other, being vindictive.

3) **SB 1854:** cleared away all the K-12 provisions that affected the CCs. Thousands of changes were made. The Board of Governors (BOG) now has authority to do things

(Continued on Page 13)

NOTICES

(Continued from Page 2)

films, art exhibits, and performances of contemporary music are also included on the program.

For information write Harriette Seiler, Conference Director, Department of Classical and Modern Languages, University of Louisville, Louisville, KY 40292.

20-23 March 1991. CCCC ANNUAL CONVENTION. Marriot Copley Place, Boston, MA. Theme: Times of Trial, Reorientation, and Reconsideration: A *fin de siecle* Review/Prophecy.

For information write CCCC 1991 Conference, 1111 Kenyon Rd., Urbana, IL 61801.

3-5 June 1991. FIFTH ANNUAL SUMMER INSTITUTE FOR TEACHERS OF LITERATURE TO UNDERGRADUATES. Ocean Creek Resort and Conference Center, Myrtle Beach, SC. Theme: Critical Theory and Practice: Implications for the Curriculum and Pedagogy.

The meeting will feature presentations, seminars, and discussion groups on issues concerning recent developments in theory and critical practice and how they have influenced or can influence curricular structures and teaching. Seminar leaders are Barbara Christian (Professor of Afro-American Studies, UC Berkeley), Gerald Graff (Professor of Humanities and English, Northwestern University), and Robert Scholes (Professor of Humanities, Brown University). Discussion leaders will be Brenda Green (Medgar Evers College, CUNY), Joseph F. Trimmer (Ball State University), and Tilly Warnock (University of Wyoming).

The registration fee ($300) includes tuition, workshop materials, three luncheons, and the welcoming social hour and buffet dinner. For registration information write Membership Service representative, NCTE, 1111 Kenyon Rd., Urbana, IL 61801.

20-22 June 1991. SEVENTH ANNUAL YOUNG RHETORICIANS' CONFERENCE. Monterey Peninsula College, Monterey, CA.

Maxine Hairston (University off Texas) will deliver the keynote speech; Gabriele Rico (San Jose State University) and Sheridan Blau (UC Santa Barbara) will present a Saturday morning session on "Literature and the Personal Response." Other sessions include workshops on "Responding to Student Writing" (Kim Flachman, CSU Bakersfield), "Composing as a Woman" (Elizabeth Flynn, Michigan Tech), and "Moving Toward the Interactive Classroom" (Judith Stanford, Rivier College, New Hampshire), and sessions exploring "Writing about Literature in the Two-Year College" (Bill Lay, Kalamazoo Valley Community College), "Rethinking The Canon" (Elaine Apthorp, San Jose State University), and "The Professional Self-Image of Composition Teachers (Hans Guth, SJSU).

Fees: $40. For more information call Hans Guth (408-924-4435) or Gabriele Rico (408-646-4100) or write them at Department of English, San Jose State University, One Washington Square, San Jose, CA 95192-0090.

LITERACY AND THE CLASSROOM

What an English Teacher Should Teach

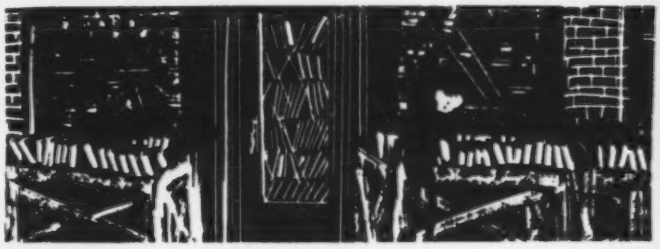
by **SANDRA CHRISTENSON**
Santa Monica College, et alia

Before an English teacher can teach her pupils to be literate, that is, to read and write and, to add to this definition, to think clearly and logically, she must first imbue them with the desire to be literate and with the confidence and responsibility to try. She should also teach them the idea that "literacy" is not an over-night affair, but rather a process which takes time, effort, and discipline, sharing with them that she herself is still learning how to become more "literate."

How does one inspire another with the desire to be more proficient in language arts? I prefer the pragmatic approach. First off, whether it be a remedial or a freshman composition class, I have my students answer four questions at the beginning of the semester in class in the form of an essay with at least one paragraph per question: Why are you here? What scares you the most about being here? What improvements do you wish to make in your reading and writing while in this class? What are you prepared to do to bring about these improvements? Not only do I get some impression of their writing skills this way, but I can now talk with them about their personal goals and their hidden anxieties. In an English class there are always both, but many times these remain underground. This exercise may not instill a desire for "literacy," but it may make the reason for it seem less obscure.

After my students and I have partially laid bare the fear and loathing of English, we may finally see the naked desire for proficiency. Most students have it; they want to write well; they would like to understand what they read; some have the desire buried very deeply, and many do not have any idea how far away they are from being "literate." How to get it and not in five easy lessons is the next step. Here comes the time, discipline, and effort factor and here is where most of us, student and teacher alike, falter. The students do poorly because they haven't put in the time, and the teacher feels frustrated because her students have not benefited from all her red marks, her explanations, her threats and cajoling.

True, a teacher can and must motivate her students, but ultimately the responsibility is on the student. That is probably the most important lesson a teacher can teach. That is why I have an agreement with all of my students signed by them at the beginning of the semester. They agree to attend class regularly, complete the assignments on time, read each reading twice, look up any unknown vocabulary and record it in a journal with the rest of their journal writings, read the assigned novels, and so on. Every class and every semester I have a different contract. Monthly, I have my students write an assessment of their progress. If a student feels or I feel that he has not lived up to his agreement, I ask him to come see me. He talks; I listen. The bottom line is that the student is responsible. Can he or she fulfill the commitment? If not, should that student be in class? Most all students opt to be in class. Some students need revised contracts; they may need to do extra work in certain areas. This becomes another thing they must be responsible for—their own progress or lack thereof. Of course, not all students succeed who try, and some students may need another revision of their contract. Poor spellers do not easily become good spellers or even fair spellers, but there are steps they can take to become more aware of their mistakes, and perhaps to rectify some of them.



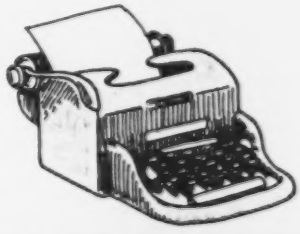
This leads us to the idea of confidence. When students take responsibility and are candid about their fears and their failings, they can many times begin to overcome them, at least partially. After all, pre-Freshman Comp (English 21) and Freshman Comp (English 1) don't claim to work miracles. But as the old chestnut goes, Nothing succeeds like success, and using this contract we are able to review and see the progress each student has made, even if it's progress in terms of being honest with himself.

As for making "literacy" palatable, I try to assign reading and writing assignments that are relevant and challenging. Along with the usual short essays of nonfiction, my English 1 class last semester read Michael Herr's *Dispatches* and Kurt Vonnegut's *Mother Night*, while my English 21 class read *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Black Boy*, and *The Day No Pigs Would Die*. I had much success with these novels as far as stimulating student discussion and enlarging their sense of what writing can do. I also have students write complaint letters, letters that they actually send written to an audience of their choice trying to persuade them to believe a certain way. I have them write autobiographical pieces modeled after Langston Hughes' "Salvation." This I do at the beginning and at the end of the semester, for these are the essays the students most likely will want to save. These assignments sometimes help them to see themselves as people in the world with something to say and someone to say it to.

And, of course, that takes work.

For my part, I bring in editorials, sports columns, movie reviews, short stories, cartoons, even films to share with them if appropriate, trying to emphasize the idea that "literacy" is a process that's on-going; it's reading and writing and thinking, and it never stops.

Sandra Christenson teaches part-time at more colleges than she cares to name, writes fiction part-time, but is a full-time person.



CALL FOR PAPERS

25 January 1991 deadline. THE EIGHTEENTH ANNUAL FAULKNER AND YOKNAPATAWPHA CONFERENCE, 28 July-2 August 1991, University of Mississippi. Theme: Faulkner and Psychology.

The organizers welcome any psychoanalytic interpretations of Faulkner's fiction, encouraging, in particular, Freudian, Freudian-revisionist, Jungian, feminist-psychoanalytical, Lacanian, and related approaches.

Authors whose papers are selected will receive (1) a waiver of the conference registration fee; (2) lodging at the University Alumni House; (3) reimbursement of travel expenses within the continental United States. Papers presented at the conference will be published by the University Press of Mississippi.

Submit two copies of the manuscript, follow the *Chicago Manual of Style, 13th ed.*, and limit the manuscript to between 3000 and 6000 words.

Manuscripts and inquiries should be addressed to Ann J. Abadie, Center for the Study of Southern Culture, The University of Mississippi, University, MS 38677. (601) 232-5993.

RISK-TAKING AND WRITING

(Continued from Page 1)

selected jurors is college-educated and none admitted to any particular acquaintance with or knowledge of art (not photography or visual art, specifically; art, period!). They were instructed by both judge and prosecutor to consider the average citizen's standards, not their own. Who would dare to describe the average citizen in today's multicultural explosion of a society? How are the members of that jury to decide redeeming or artistic value when they admittedly have no knowledge of art? Despite these attempts by judges and lawyers to manipulate the judicial process by disposing of informed jurors capable of critical thinking, the Arts Center and its director were exonerated—in this case.

Nevertheless, it seems as if jurors nowadays are selected on the basis of their ignorance of topical issues. Lawyers and judges insult prospective jurors daily by not allowing the possibility that informed, well-read citizens can debate an issue in their minds and still bring a degree of objectivity to judging the innocence or guilt of their peers. What does a jury of peers mean in 1990? A citizenry of equally unaware, passive robots?

Try out such questions on your English 1A students. Have a student who has been called to jury duty report to the class on the selection process. Have a group of students visit the Mapplethorpe exhibit and write up their responses. Let them read their evaluations to the class and then launch into a discussion of defining "community standards" or "average citizen's response." Follow this up with a writing assignment arguing for or against the National Endowment for the Arts' requirement that receipt of grant money now depends on signing a pledge that the awardee will not create obscene art. If this seems too remote to your unartistic-minded students, remind them that books such as *Brave New World, Catcher in the Rye*, and even *Huckleberry Finn* are being expunged from high school reading lists and yanked from public library shelves around the country.

The students who sit in our writing classrooms today are voters and signers of petitions and referenda as well as prospective jurors. Some of them will be voting on domestic partners' issues and the rights of the homeless, on funding for AIDS and women's resources for combating chronic fatigue disorders and cancer, on rape protection laws. These are hot issues and if we cool them off for treatment in the classroom, our students will produce cool essays that make nothing happen—in our students' minds, imaginations, or lives. To sanitize or anesthetize controversy makes it safe, or even irrelevant. To see the writing classroom as a laboratory, separate from life, is to separate experimentation from experience.

I felt like such a researcher at times this summer at San Francisco State University where I participated in the Bay Area Writing Project's open program. With one notable exception—middle school social studies instructor Shelly Weintraub—presenters did not stress that the classroom is part of a problematic world and that students bring their lives into our testing chambers day after day. It is from Weintraub that I have borrowed the Justice Douglas quotation, along with some inspired techniques to promote persuasive thinking and writing. Instead of accepting students as blank slates and expecting them to write provocatively and interestingly in a vacuum, she gives her students background material, facts, and statistics, and presents hypothetical and actual legal cases to provoke critical thinking. We, too, can use this technique to lubricate our students' critical thinking

wheels—and not just for thinking *about themselves*, but to facilitate students' thinking about issues in the world and about how those issues affect their lives. If we use writing in our classrooms to help students find their introspective voices, we have succeeded, but only partially; if those voices can speak only of themselves and their sometimes deliberately narrow worlds, how are they to think and act intelligently in their communities? Solipsism as the end-product of education does not an egalitarian society make—nor, for that matter, a very stimulating one either.

Sometimes in an attempt to sound progressive in our methods we glibly speak of our students as a community of writers. But if the community begins and ends in the classroom only, within and among our response groups, without infecting the communities our students bring onto our campuses daily, interact with at work, and go home to at night, then we have short-circuited the education process.

What I also did not hear voiced as a predominant theme during this summer's program was the idea that writing and the discussions that fuel it can be used to confront and potentially defuse the racism, sexism, and homophobia that permeate our classrooms and sometimes our faculty lounges, as well. Is it going too far to observe that silence equals complicity in these -isms and phobias? Most of us can now talk about sexism with our students. (Indeed, not to do so is considered regressive.) The discussion has begun in earnest in many writing classrooms (even as it lags behind in seriousness in the palaces of power: witness the jejune attitude recently displayed by certain senators toward feminists testifying at the Souter confirmation hearings). Racism still rankles too close to home for many of us; it is convenient to contain it for exploration in ethnic studies courses. Yes, it should be examined there—as well as in what *our* students read and write about. Unless we have gone through life with our eyes and our ears and our minds closed completely, we should all know a great deal about racism. Even here, however, in this uncharted territory, a significant exchange of thoughts and feelings is in progress in some classrooms.

Homophobia remains undiagnosed. It was untouched in 1975 when I was a grad student, and fifteen years later the word seldom finds itself on the lips of English instructors. If we talk about lesbians and gays, will our students think we are one? Discussions of sexism and racism do not elevate discomfort to such a pitch. Students squirm when the "g" or "l" words are uttered, and professors move on to more comfortable examples to illustrate discrimination, or abuses of civil rights, or hate crimes. I'm reminded of George Bush inviting lesbian and gay activists to the White House to witness his signing of the Hate Crimes Statistics Act. I don't imagine he did the inviting personally, and he probably was not particularly comfortable in their presence, but he acknowledged through his signature the fact of violence against lesbians and gays (as well as other minorities) on the streets of every town and city in the country. Can't we talk about such injustice in our own classrooms? Let students confront each other with words, spoken and written in our classrooms, rather than vent their ignorance, frustration, and rage in their neighborhoods or on their jobs. When such an uncomfortable issue demands our attention in our classrooms, we need to be instigators and referees both. And let's look at the writing that results. Could it ever be dull?

Such "subversive" teaching methods cannot be undertaken all at once by one instructor in one semester or quarter. And I wouldn't suggest "diving into the wreck" on the first day of class. (I tried out what I thought was a safe essay on gay and lesbian farmers in the first week of a 1B class, and several students did not return. *Of course* there might have been other reasons.) Before you risk making your students uncomfortable, generate trust in you and each other first. Also, be alert to circumstances on campus or in the community that students are bound to notice and talk about outside the classroom. Don't drag in issues from out of the blue. This semester I'm trying out a response-partner exercise on loaded language and stereotypes, with lesbians and gays as targets. You don't have to listen too closely on any campus for examples.

We don't need to invite the Father Terminiellos of our communities into our classrooms. We do need to acknowledge that such demagogues still exist; one is a candidate for the U.S. Senate from Louisiana. We and our students, together in the classroom, need to be provoked by such prejudices and to examine our preconceptions about such manipulators of our thoughts. Allowing our students to see inside our hearts and minds might just open theirs to the blank page in front of them. Teaching writing can include as many risks as writing itself.

H. W. Seng is a third-year part-timer in the Bay Area, enjoying reading student essays now instead of editing professional ones, although the transition was mighty.

TALKING BACK

(Continued from Page 4)

since she's never seen one.) Her modest and conciliatory tone effectively protects her from the unpleasant specifics traditional teachers espouse, but we clearly sense from her basic assumptions that her world, like that of many young teachers, is divided into the student-centered angels of critical engagement and the monstrous devils of traditional domination. (We also know where those who doubt the efficacy of peer-evaluation are going to end up!)

Please, my young colleagues, revel in your youth and your energy; by all means replace our truths with your own truths. But try to keep a sense of the human comedy, the absurdity of all enthusiasts, the general radioactive decay of doctrines, and the sad but inevitable decline of all Young Turks to Old Mullahs.

MARK HAWKINS
Foothill College

SACRAMENTO SCENE

(Continued from Page 10)

that only the Legislature could do before. BOG, for example, now has complete authority over the academic calendar, which is now part of Title V and which the BOG has the authority to change. The BOG and the Chancellor's Office now have greater authority than previously. This means that the faculty needs to have some means to offer its opinions and views, to gain some fair influence over what decisions are made. The Chancellor would do well to set up a system by which the faculty has an equal voice with managers' groups.

4) **The "General Education Transfer Curriculum" (GETC)** was, again and still, the object of more work this past summer. The Intersegmental Committee of the Academic Senates edited and approved what it puts forth as the final document. According to my sources, it paid particular attention "to the concerns expressed about the nature of the Critical Thinking course that could count as meeting UC's second English composition requirement." The Committee intends to work during the coming academic year on the specific means of implementing the GETC. The program would then be in full force in the Fall of 1991.

Here is the section on English Communication as it now stands in all its bureaucratic and redundant glory:

Subject Area: English Communication (3 courses; 9 semester, 12-15 quarter units)*

The English Communication requirement shall be fulfilled by completion of three semester or nine units of lower-division courses in English reading and written composition (1 course), critical thinking-English composition (1 course), and oral communication* (1 course). Successful completion of the course in reading and written composition shall be prerequisite to the course in critical thinking-English composition. The second semester of English composition required by the University of California may be met by those courses in critical thinking taught in a variety of disciplines which provide, as a major component, instruction in the composition of substantial essays and require students to write a

sequence of such essays. Written work shall be evaluated for both composition and critical thinking. Texts chosen in this area should reflect an awareness of cultural diversity. Courses designed exclusively for the satisfaction of remedial composition cannot be counted towards fulfillment of the English composition requirement.

Instruction approved for fulfillment of the requirement in communication is to be designed to emphasize the content of communication as well as the form and should provide an understanding of the psychological basis and the social significance of communication, including how communication operates in various situations. Applicable course(s) should view communication as the process of human symbolic interaction focussing on the communicative process from the rhetorical perspective: reasoning and advocacy, organization, accuracy; the discovery, critical evaluation and reporting of information; reading and listening effectively as well as speaking and writing. This must include active participation and practice in written communication and oral communication.

Instruction in critical thinking is to be designed to achieeve an understanding of the relationship of language to logic, which should lead to the ability to analyze, criticize, and advocate ideas, to reason inductively and deductively, and to identify the assumptions upon which particular conclusions depend. The minimal competence to be expected at the successful conclusion of instruction in critical thinking should be the ability to distinguish fact from judgment, and belief from knowledge, to use elementary inductive and deductive processes, and to recognize common logical errors or fallacies of language and thought.

* Students transferring to UC do not have to meet the oral communication requirement.

For more explanations and information on the GETC, please refer to *inside english*, May 1990.

News From the Regions

REGION III: SAN FRANCISCO SOUTH BAY/MONTEREY

Directors: JO FORD, *Mission College*; JOHN LOVAS, *De Anza College*.

Leadership in Governance: Creating Conditions for Successful Decision-Making in the Community College, co-written by JOHN C. LOVAS (*De Anza College*) and Thomas W. Fryer, Jr. (chancellor and district superintendent of the Foothill-De Anza Community College District), will be published in February 1991 by Jossey-Bass.

REGION VII: NORTH LOS ANGELES

Directors: CARL FRIEDLANDER, *Los Angeles City College*; VELORIS LANG, *Glendale College*.

HARI VISHWANADHA (*Santa Monica College*) has been busily involved at professional organizations. In November 1990 he presented a paper on Japanese women diarists at the Tenth Annual Western Regional Community College Humanities Association meeting in Portland, Oregon. In March 1991 he will read a paper titled "Varieties of Truth: Logic and Persuasion Across the Disciplines" in which he will explore the rhetorical strategies in disciplines such as law, medicine, political science, pure science, and performing arts.

January 1991 will see the publication of DANIEL CANO's (*Santa Monica College*) first novel, *Pepe Rios*. Partly based on Cano's grandfather's life, the novel traces the experiences of a young man who served in Pancho Villa's army and then made the arduous journey north to the United States.

REGION X: SAN DIEGO

Directors: MURIEL DAVIS, *San Diego Mesa College*; NANCY NADEAU, *Imperial Valley College*.

CANDACE WALTZ (*San Diego City College*) is the first Californian to win the Outstanding Instructor Award established by the Association of Community College Trustees. First chosen the Outstanding Instructor by the Western Association of Community College Trustees, Waltz was one of five regional winenrs from which the national winner was chosen in October 1990. She was cited for her seminal role in developing honors programs in the San Diego Community College District and for her work in developing study programs that are credited with substantial cuts in college dropout rates.

The honors core curriculum at San Diego City College includes vocational courses in addition to the more traditional science and liberal arts courses. This unique feature attracts a good percentage of students from ethnic groups traditionally underrepresented in honors programs. Project ACHIEVE, which Waltz helped develop at SDCC, provides academic survival skills for "at risk" students, providing each with a faculty mentor. Students in this program have shown a 93 percent retention rate in their first two semesters.

STORM

The grass across the street just disappears
except for the inevitable sweater
left by a careless child, a blue Cashmere
that could be a lesser bruise on the arm
of noon. A boy, thin as a thermometer,
looks up at an approaching thunderstorm

then rubs his hands, like rain could keep him warm,
and paws through a backpack. A few bats dance
around like torn-off pieces of the storm
and birds, in bunches as if they'd been sneezed,
finally land in a circle like a seance.
If trees have heads of hair, now they shake these

in disapproval as the world's debris
in one huge apocalyptic breath
makes the whole neighborhood a littered beach.
What once was solid is revealed as rain.
I see my neighbor, Mrs. Galbraith,
dissolving as she mews for Boots, lost again.

Then just like that, it's past. The hidden shapes
we lived among assert themselves again:
a pay phone with its light, the fire escapes,
a car—everything that is a caption
so we can read the world then touch its skin
then point our faces toward the timid sun.

RON KOERTGE
Pasadena City College

COLLEGE SURVIVAL ENGLISH

Building Communication Skills *AND* Self-Esteem

by ULRICA BELL-PERKINS
and DIANE R. HOLT
Cerro Coso College,
Southern Outreach Center

In 1986, Assemblyman John Vasconcellos sponsored a bill in the California Legislature—subsequently passed and signed by the governor—establishing a statewide task force on building self-esteem. Vasconcellos, who more recently has chaired the joint-legislative committee for updating California's Master Plan for Higher Education, believes that low self-esteem is a major contributor to many of society's social problems. His leadership in focusing public attention on the subject has resulted in formation of local self-esteem task forces in many counties of the state. In the following article, two veteran community college faculty members describe some of their efforts in helping to build self-esteem in their students.

A black woman in her fifties with a warm smile and a big heart, Cynthia has been out of school for thirty-three years. When she entered our College Survival English class, she broke out in hives. Devoutly religious, an ordained minister, mother of seven, grandmother of thirteen, Cynthia was intimidated by the younger students and convinced that she did not belong in school.

In a traditional basic skills English class, Cynthia probably would have dropped or sat in a corner all semester quietly doing grammar exercises, becoming even more convinced that she was a failure at school. In our class she set her personal goals for her education, wrote about her dream house and garden, described her values, tutored other students in writing skills, and asked questions about how notetaking, reading, and other study and life skills could help her survive in college. During the course of the semester she laughed, cried, and became determined to finish with an "A" so she could help others.

Cynthia was one of twenty-five students who were our pioneers in the pilot section of College Survival English offered at the Southern Outreach Center of Cerro Coso College on Edwards Air Force Base, located in the Mojave Desert, one hundred miles northeast of Los Angeles. Although their lives revolved around a remote military base, in their diversity these were typical community-college students—representing varied ages, cultural and ethnic backgrounds, with differing abilities, interests, goals, and motivations.

Drawing from our own training and experiences as an English professor and a counselor/sociologist, we designed the course on the premise that a student's potential for success in college correlates closely with his or her self-esteem. We theorized that many students arrive in our classes with low self-esteem and that a course designed to clarify values and develop self-confidence as well as to build study and communication skills would enhance an individual's chances for success in English and other college work.

Prior to the pilot offering, we spent several hours each week for most of a semester planning content and developing experiences and case studies for the class. Bell-Perkins, the English professor, assumed primary responsibility for coaching and critiquing students in English skills, while Holt, the counselor, facilitated frequent experiences and presentations in such areas as goal setting and time management, risking and motivation, effective listening, values clarification, and the role of self-talk in building self-esteem.

To stimulate student interest, we created colorful titles for class topics, such as "Papers are Lovelier the Second Time Around," for a segment on rewriting. This segment blended well with the exercise on risking for Jose, a Mexican-American student who took the class to help him graduate from a high school where he was doing poorly in English. He rewrote every assignment several times to correct his errors. For the exercise on risking, students were invited to share a notable failure, and Jose volunteered to read an answer on a quiz he had failed. He then announced he was determined to get an A or B the next time, and he did.

Mark, a black sergeant in his forties, mature and quiet, was another student for whom the course helped build both self-confidence and English skills. Mark was preparing for a second career after being out of school for many years. Like Cynthia, he was skeptical about teachers and writing assignments. After a few weeks of introduction to power processes, study and life skills, he became impatient for grammar and led the class to vocally demand it. He became a leader in discussion of fragments, run-on sentences, comma splices, and semicolons, all taken from student assignments on goal-setting and planning for success in college. In his final paper for the class on strategies he would use to meet his goals, Mark expressed a determination to complete his college degree within a few years. He subsequently enrolled in our more advanced English 1A, where his papers were used as examples of strong, well-punctuated sentences. He agreed that survival English helped him well along the way toward becoming a more self-confident and successful student.

Several skeptics with whom we discussed our ideas doubted that we could meet our objectives of building both English skills and self-esteem in a one-class/one-semester time frame. We believed, however, that many assignments and experiences could meet both goals simultaneously; e.g. students wrote journal entries for goal-setting and documenting their progress in the course; essay assignments became values-clarification exercises. We likened our model to the chemistry principle of molecules fitting between molecules, as is illustrated by a cup of sugar dissolving in a cup of water without a significant increase in the volume.

A rather roundabout path led us to combine English instruction with building self-esteem in students. Bell-Perkins had worked in a variety of programs such as the Peace Corps, Upward Bound, and the Job Corps with students who lacked skills, motivation, and self-confidence. Holt knew from her doctoral work in adult developmental psychology and from her teaching experience in human development that these deficiencies could be successfully addressed. Together they brainstormed possibilities.

At first uncertain how such a class might work with a diverse population on a conservative Air Force Base, we decided to give it a try. The selection of the *The Master Student* by David Ellis as our text was made after Bell-Perkins attended a master student "Be Here Now" workshop in San Francisco in the summer of 1988. Jon Tittle, dean of Cerro Coso's Southern Outreach Center, gave his enthusiastic support and encouragement. Cerro Coso also provided an instructional aide and a student assistant.

We believe this level of support was an important factor in the student success rate of 90 percent that we experienced in the pilot course. Our basic skills classes enroll many high risk students and the dropout rate is typically 40 to 50 percent. In addition to the high persistence rate, there has been a marked impact on individual student confidence and determination.

As we reflect on our experiences with the pilot course, another student comes to mind to illustrate the impact the class had on individual lives. Marie had slunk into the back of the room during the first week, never looking at anyone, shy and terrified of returning to school after many years. Her voice shook when she answered questions, and she broke into a sweat whenever there was a test. As the semester progressed, we learned that she was from a background of incredible poverty, had been an abused child and wife, and had felt trapped for many years in a loveless marriage without hope and opportunity.

Marie began to use the strategies for success we presented along with English skills. She liked assertive strategies best, and began to sit right in the center front of the class, bringing a colorful cushion to make her bad back more comfortable. She began

(Continued on Page 15)

COLLEGE SURVIVAL ENGLISH

(Continued from Page 14)

to smile and make eye contact and asked if she could tape our short lectures and discussions.

One day we noticed that her *Master Student* text was not only "defaced," it was alive with colorful markings and underlinings that indeed made it her own. She displayed considerable pride in her notebook, which she gaily decorated with cartoons, drawings, inspiring quotes and proverbs.

Then Marie discovered the library. We took the class there one day for a treasure hunt, and Marie revealed she had never been in a library before. Her eyes opened wider than an eight-year-old's in Baskin Robbins as we took her from one section to another; she pored with amazement over reference books, novels, and the other printed wealth surrounding her.

On the day of her book report, she acknowledged her nervousness, then did a wonderful job conveying her enthusiasm for what she had read, showing how she had "owned" the book and made it a part of her life. She asked the class to be patient while she dealt with her fear, but she assured them she would finish and she did. Marie has since done well in more advanced English classes. She reads at least an hour every day and is trying to decide whether to become a librarian or start her own business.

We can't say for sure whether Cynthia, Jose, Mark, Marie, and their classmates in Survival English would have succeeded in basic skills English as we formerly taught it. All might have passed and learned many things. We are convinced, however, that none would have realized the powerful personal life transformation each of them experienced. As they began the course, most lacked self-confidence, and several exhibited sheer terror about college and a deep sense of personal defeat with academics. As the semester progressed, they continued to become master students developing self-confidence and study and writing skills. By the end of the course, they exemplified faith in themselves coupled with the courage to learn, grow, and succeed.

LOSS

A drop of cold
A needle in my side
A fragrance
Enters unannounced
And unwelcome

I protest
And at the mere objection
The army of memories
Floods into my head
And takes it captive

I resign
Memory gloats
And Loss leaves a bootheel
On my face.

TOM HOFER

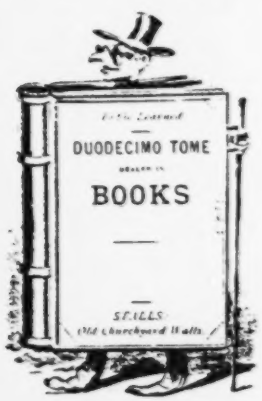
Tom Hofer proofreads every issue of inside english *in his capacity as typesetter at the Palisadian-Post. He is considering returning to college as an English major, inspired by this journal and the movie "Dead Poet's Society." When not writing his own blurb, Tom writes poetry, plays bass in a punk rock band, and is currently perfecting the recipe for a "killer" chicken gumbo.*

TALKING AND LISTENING

(Continued from Page 9)

able to appreciate the author's purpose in writing that story. But a few do capture the significance of the story. There may be four or five who will do so with the next story.

Here's another example: I once read T.S. Eliot's "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" in its entirety to a remedial class. To get the discussion going, I commented on the impossibility of someone's being unable to "walk on a beach and eat a peach." A young lady said, "That's sad." There was silence for a moment, and she added, "Is he all right now?" The question stunned me, even though I knew these students had no knowledge of the poet's work or his life. I explained that the poet was deceased; that his early life, especially his first marriage, was not happy; that in his later years he married his secretary, half his age, and that he was later photographed with her—doing a jig! Her response: "Are you sure?" She may as well have asked, "You wouldn't kid me about something as important as that, would you?" Is it possible that this same young lady pursued an English major and studied the same poem in graduate school, being terribly embarrassed by what she would then term her "incredible naivete" when she was enrolled in that remedial class? Of course it is. With a little luck she will realize, too, that her more complete knowledge of poet and poem is gained with a certain loss.



All of us recall being shocked to learn that a segment of the reading audience of Jonathan Swift's "A Modest Proposal" actually thought that Swift was proposing that Irish babies be killed, dressed, and baked to provide a delicacy for the English while solving the overpopulation problem in Ireland. Such naivete should not surprise us: we find it in the classroom at the community college.

Oral reading of great works does not provide an immediate solution to the problem our community-college students have with abstractions about the great works of literature. But they hear some fine sounds on their way to such knowledge. And isn't that the reason most of us teach literature? We are enthralled with great lines. We go to hear a poet's reading even though we have read and re-read all of her works. We want to hear how she says those lines. Community-college students enjoy good sounds, possibly even more than their highly literate peers attending the university. To push abstraction at them before they are ready results in what nine out of ten will say about poetry when they reach our classrooms: "I hate poetry."

Are there drawbacks to this oral-reading approach to teaching literature and writing? There are several. The first is the problem with the excessively shy person; he or she must be assured at the outset that all oral reading will be voluntary. (In my experience only one person kept her silence. The second is the problem with a few quite literate persons who—no doubt because academics were never of much concern to them—wind up in a remedial class and resent what appears to be "grade-school methodology." With a little luck an instructor can talk these students into cooperating with their fellow students as group leaders in small-group activities or, with even more luck, talk them into becoming role-model readers.

So with these drawbacks and with the full realization that the oral-reading approach is a transitional step from the residual oral to the literate, what else need be said? First, that every student, even one not actively involved in classroom activities, will become a better reader; that, in turn, will make him a better writer. Second, that every student who begins to enjoy the sound of great lines will gain an appreciation of literature, even if she fails to appreciate the structure of a particular novel or dramatic irony in a play. Third, that the biggest plus of all is meeting that remedial class and being able to promise that they can achieve literacy—without being frustrated by formal grammar, definition of terms, writing critical essays when they don't understand the criteria on which they are to base their judgments. In short, the oral-reading approach is for the community-college English student—all the way to higher-level literature courses. For even in those courses, a little reading aloud of great lines goes a long way.

Recently retired from Fullerton College, Joe Collignon continues to write articles and to publish textbooks designed to assist the "hearing" learner. His articles have appeared in Saturday Review, College English, Teachers College Record, *and other publications.*

TIP OF MY TONGUE

Send Me Your Huddled Parts of Speech

by H. WENDELL SMITH
Santa Monica College, retired

I was about to tidy my desk the other day when I stopped short. *Tidy* is an adjective, not a verb. Do I have a legal right to use the description for the action? I decided to put off the job and call my lawyer.

She assured me there's no law against word abuse in the marketplace. The adjective *tidy* has no legal recourse against me if I want to use it as a verb. But what's legal is not always morally right, and I want to do the right thing.

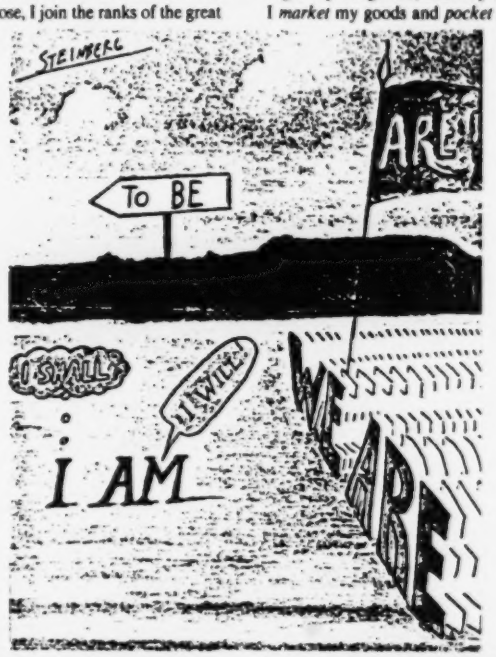
Now, I'm not actually a bleeding heart about this. I've never started any protest movements against word abuse. I've even stood by and listened to the English language being mugged by a gang, sometimes right on national television, without raising a finger. But I'm still ashamed when I catch myself joining the muggers.

Is it hypocritical to assign a word to a "part of speech" and then use it any way I please? Is it fair to wrench a word from its assigned job and use it to do windows? Look at poor *wrench* there. It's a noun, the name of a tool, but I've made it do a verb's work. Shouldn't I be restrained?

Well, I don't think so. Purists may argue against using a noun as a verb or an adjective as a noun. But let me suggest another way of looking at the matter. Putting words to work outside their expertise may not be an unfair labor practice, after all. Think of it as liberating words from their chains.

By turning *wrench* into a verb, I release it from the tedium of its everyday job. I give it freedom and opportunity, a chance to go out in the world and find adventure.

When I crack the shackles of words and turn them loose, I join the ranks of the great emancipators of history. Think how many words I've already liberated. I've taken thousands of imprisoned nouns, verbs, and adjectives, all yearning to breathe free, and led them to liberty.



Nouns do verbs' work when I *oil* a hinge, when I *hoe* the garden and *seed* it and *water* the flowers. I *host* a party, *ice* the drinks, *sugar* my doughnuts, and *wolf* them down. I *market* my goods and *pocket* the money. When I make a mistake, I *mess* up.

I turn verb into noun whenever I take a *rest* or enjoy my *sleep*, give a gentle *squeeze*, or have a good *laugh*. I no longer wince when told that a book is a good *read*.

As for the *tidy* clan, I've opened the iron gates for hundreds of once-imprisoned adjectives. I *warm* my coffee or *cool* my heels. I *calm* my nerves and *smooth* things over. I *brown* my potatoes, *black* someone's eye.

Despite my efforts, though, many adjectives still languish in chains. I never *cold* my coffeee, and so far I have never *purpled* an eye. Obviously much affirmative action has yet to be taken.

It's been centuries since the prepositions broke from their bastille and started new lives as adverbs, and vice-versa. Scores of salty verbs, especially from the four-letter ranks, have found new work as expletives.

Lately I've been worrying about the imprisonment of the conjunctions, those go-between words, especially *and*. They seem forever tied to their lowly job of nailing other parts of speech together and have but meager life of their own. Some dark night I'm going to snip the bars and try *and* as a verb.

Liberated or not, words should work for me. After all, who is to be boss? If I want to call a golf club an *iron*, a grassy plot a *green*, and where my ball goes the *rough*—why not?

Of course, I'm still not sure all this is legal, moral, and non-fattening. And I want to be a fair and considerate boss. When words labor in my fields, I don't want them cheerless or mistreated.

Just in case the Parts of Speech Union Local 47 should lodge a complaint, I've decided not to tidy my desk for a while.

I hope the union doesn't notice *lodge*.

H. Wendell Smith enjoys retirement from Santa Monica College and watches parts of speech shift their categories in Ashland, Oregon. He writes "Tip of My Tongue," wry essays on how we use words—and how words misuse us. He's the author of six books on writing and usage.

UNCONSCIOUS HUMOR

Languid Arts

by ELIZABETH MACEY
Rancho Santiago College

Sometimes when the rockpile of ungraded student papers seems to overwhelm me, I come across a word, a phrase, or a sentence that makes me pause and smile. Whether it's spelling, grammar, definitions, or logic, the diversity of our language continues to bring the surprises that please me even as they remind me that there are higher rockpiles ahead.

Unusual spelling is often fun:

"Sex among teenagers is a groaning problem every year."

"Boweling is good exercise."

"I don't like men who are half-balled."

"My friend does a lot of groping now that her boyfriend is gone."

It's not surprising that grammar confuses students. For example, when we discussed adjectives and adverbs in English N60, I asked Chris, who seemed to be trying hard to understand, what a particular word was and he answered, "Adjeverb."

Definitions often give students trouble as well. For instance, when asked to define *reverie*, one fellow wrote, "The Bostonian that yelled the British are coming." Another student deffined *writhe*: "Writhe — the opposite of left. Ex. The man moved to his writhe and not his left." A non-native student asked what a stool was. I explained that it was similar to a chair but was often higher and usually had three legs. He looked very puzzled and said, "I don't understand. My doctor told me to bring a stool next week.

But perhaps the errors in logic are the most surprising:

"Different types of games are played in Reno *e.g.*, dice throwing, cards, and Russian Roulette."

"Lotteries can destroy the economy of a nation because they might lead to too much money in circulation."

"For many people, not watching television is like having a lung removed from their heart."

"When Martin came into the world in 1929, he entered so quietly the doctor had to spank him several times. At such a young age he began asking questions about Negroes standing in a bread line. He was a very bright young boy."

"After watering, tuck each tender leaf as if one is making love to a member of the opposite sex, and one will notice a much healthier, fuller, and erect plant."

"The cat killer helped me put my friend in a bag and told me to bury it somewhere special. There was a long pause and a moment of science."

Sometimes even the title gives me a smile. A student wrote a paragraph describing her first skiing trip to Mammoth where she tried to ski down a slope called Climax. Her paper was titled, "My First Attempt at Climax."

One woman concluded her paper saying, "We were both about to die. Unfortunately, the Lord was with us and kept us safe." Sometimes I feel I am about to die when faced with hundreds of papers. Unfortunately, the Lord keeps me safe. However, there's always the chance that the current paper will unearth another surprise for the study of languid arts.

Elizabeth Macey teaches Introduction to Composition, Freshman Composition, and Survey of Literature by Women at Rancho Santiago College in Santa Ana.

ENGLISH COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA TWO-YEAR COLLEGES — ECCTYC

inside english

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INSIDE

inside english

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Teaching English 1 is easy if you follow one instructor's nine steps. Page 7

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IDEOLOGY, PEDAGOGY, AND POLITICS

Writing As Confusion *or* What and Why We Teach

by GORDON TAYLOR
Yuba College

It is no great perception to say that we disagree about why we teach writing and what kinds of writing we should teach and how we should go about it: in short, the discipline is in disarray. To read those who get published in the journals (*e.g., College English*) is to run headlong into the exhortation that our teaching must be political and ideological (in the good sense) to fight

against all those political and ideological notions (in the bad sense) that currently pollute our society. Making our teaching ideological and political is just fine, even our obligation, as long as we teach the right kinds of ideology and politics. In the olden days, though, we called that indoctrination. Teaching our students to write, according to current, received wisdom, means teaching correct ideas. Our students must be taught and must have politically correct ideas even if they do not learn to write very well.

To say that our students neither write nor read very well and leave our classes doing neither much better is likewise no news. The question of how to change our students and their writing continues to plague us, but with each new era we seem to be no closer to any answer. Also, neither do we have a clear idea of what we want to change our students into. In our desperation, we invent whole new systems: Writing as Process, Research in the Classroom, the Half-Brain Theories of Left and Right (in both senses), Peer Editing, Read-a-Rounds, Collaborative Learning; we establish Departments of Composition that turn out Scholars of Writing with advanced degrees in the Subject who seem to have little grounding in the language and its traditions but with big theories of how to teach; we establish Centers for the Study of Writing—all this at enormous expense in money, time, and energy as though no one in the past had ever learned how to write or had ever taught anyone else to write.

Not long ago, one professional clearly stated, categorically, that knowing how to teach is much more important than knowing what to teach. That is a notion that we all heard in those terrible, awful education courses and one that I thought we would have abandoned as soon as we were out of the clutches of the educationists. Apparently, however, the notion has been taken up by professional compositionists (as one may now refer to them), extended even futher, and given a measure of glory and dignity by the likes of Freire, Derrida, good old Roland Barthes, and others of their breed in their impenetrable prose in translation. Things have even got to such a state that our compositionists now write impenetrable articles endlessly quoting and paraphrasing Freire, Bakhtin, Foucault, as well as each other, calling their work scholarship, expecting us all to teach our students to write in the same bloated, jargonistic style. And, after all this, nothing much seems to change: our students still seem to write as well as they ever did or didn't.

How was it then that in the past a fair number of people seemed to learn how to both read and write? They learned to write at least tolerably well (witness the eloquence of the people quoted in the TV series on the Civil War). One explanation, of course, is that education in those days was elitist, which is only partly true. But, then, it depends on what one means by *elitist*: whether one is elitist to keep other people out, disempower them; or whether one is elitist because there are certain things that people have to know in order to do certain things, for every technique and discipline has its standards and practices that its practitioners must know to carry out their tasks. To read any document that says what people had to learn to get a sixth or eighth grade education (and there were large numbers of people who were able to and did) is to discover that our college students know and understand considerably less than those earlier folks did. In addition, even if not everyone was able to take advantage of the schools in those days, were they any worse off than the numbers of students today who do not know where the Pacific Ocean is, where China and Czechoslovakia are; who do not know or care what the people in those places are so excited about?

But why do we insist that our students learn to read and write in the first place? One presenter at ECCTYC's last Statewide Conference (November 1989) seemed to indicate that he is intent on producing Writers. I am not sure that he ever explained why or even what he meant by *writers*. Others seem to want to use the process of teaching writing to politically and ideologically radicalize their students. Yet others claim that to teach people to write is to teach them to think, to understand ideas in different ways; and there are those who say people must be able to fill out applications, write reports, and such. During the years that I have been teaching English and other foreign languages, I guess that fewer than 5 percent of the students I have known ever wrote very much more than a grocery list or, in fact, much more than the famous application for a job or a test to move to a new position after they left school.

But I was not interested in teaching them these utilitarian things. We do not need courses in composition in the colleges to teach those things. I considered that the students

were there to become educated: a rather antiquarian notion, I admit, but one, still, that I consider worth the effort. Although that, too, depends on what one means by *education*. Education means lots of things to lots of people; many define it as they wish to

(WRITING, Continued on Page 4)

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Letters

RE: LOSS

To Tom Hofer:

I don't know what the killer gumbo is like, but "Loss" is terrific. *Do* return to school and be an English major! Meanwhile, please submit more of your poetry to *i.e.*

ELLEN DAVIS
Los Angeles Valley College

YES! CHANGE *i.e.*'s FORMAT

Marvin Zuckerman's suggestion to print *i.e.* in journal format has my support. Like many Anglophiles . . . I subscribe to *British Travel Letter*. Its 8½"×11" folded page size makes it convenient to use a three-hole punch on each issue, so it may be stored chronologically in a three-ring notebook. Another advantage of the 8½"×11" page size is the ease of making photocopies . . . without having to cut and paste beforehand.

. . . A similar advantage would occur if *i.e.* were published on 11"×17" paper with one fold at 8½". Instead of making up manila file folders for clipping from *i.e.*, entire, uncut issues will fit into standard notebooks for retrieval.

CHARLES WALKER
Riverside Community College

Please consider changing the size of *inside english*. I like the articles and often wish to save one, or to save an entire issue, but it doesn't fit into my files. Also it's so large it takes up a fourth of my desk, where I like to keep it in view until I grab a quiet moment to read it.

Trivial matters, but since you asked, I thought I'd pass on my reasons. As you can tell, I do enjoy the publication.

MARIE FOLEY
Santa Barbara City College

My vote goes for a change in format to a more convenient size. The current one is hard to stuff in mailboxes and hard to file.

CLARK STURGES
Diablo Valley College

I support a change in *i.e.*'s format to journal size for easier handling and storing. I think it would be worthwhile to try a new printing size, even if on an experimental basis.

But whether or not there is a change in the format of *inside english*, I want to thank you for providing two-year college English instructors with a very valuable and essential journal.

LENNY BAILEY
Butte College
CSU, Chico

inside english

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POETRY EDITOR
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San Bernardino Valley College

inside english welcomes articles, reviews, letters, and other writings of interest to instructors of English in two-year colleges. Submissions should be limited to no more than ten double-spaced typed pages. Although a detailed *Policy and Style Sheet* is available on request, in general follow *The Chicago Manual of Style*, *The MLA Style Manual*, and *The NCTE Guide for Non-Sexist Language*. The editor reserves the right to edit manuscripts so that their format and language conform to the style established in *inside english*.

Send poems to Robert Rippy, *inside english* Poetry Editor, San Bernardino Valley College, 701 So. Mt. Vernon Avenue, San Bernardino, CA 92403. Send all other submissions to Barbara Bilson Woodruff, *inside english* Editor, Santa Monica College, 1900 Pico Boulevard, Santa Monica, CA 90405. Manuscripts should be accompanied by a cover sheet that includes the author's name, address, and something about the author. Each manuscript should be titled and have the author's name and college under the title. Include a self-addressed stamped envelope.

Subscription rates for departments are $55 to $75 per year (depending on the number of issues required) and $30 dollars per year for commercial subscriptions. Remittance should be made payable to ECCTYC and sent to Richard McIntosh, ECCTYC Treasurer, Cypress College, 9200 Valley View, Cypress, CA 90630. Individual subscriptions include membership in ECCTYC and are $15 per year. Remittance should be made payable to ECCTYC and sent to Bill Decker, ECCTYC Membership Chair, College of the Sequoias, 915 Mooney Blvd., Visalia, CA 93277.

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Notices

CONFERENCES

21-23 March 1991. ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE CONFERENCE ON COLLEGE COMPOSITION AND COMMUNICATION (CCCC). Marriott and Copley Place, Boston, Massachusetts.

Conference Theme: "Times of Trial, Reorientation, and Reconsideration: A *Fin de Siecle* Review/Prophecy." Donald McQuade (Professor of English, UC Berkeley) will give the keynote address at the opening general session. In addition to the diverse and numerous concurrent sessions on topics of concern to the profession, a special series, "Writer Reading and Talking about Writing," will feature playwright Don Evans, poet and novelist Jay Parini, environmental journalist Noel Perrin, and writers Grace Paley, Ernest Herbert, and Carolivia Herron. The fourth annual Poetry Forum—"An Exultation of Larks"—is open to all who enjoy writing, reading, and listening to poetry. Requests to read should be addressed to Alice Brand, Composition Program, SUNY at Brockport, Brockport, NY 14420.

On a lighter note, the traditional Conference Cabaret with dance band and cash bar will be opened by Richard Lederer, whose talk is titled "Heels over Head in Love with Language." Also adding fun (and substance) will be the fourth annual Humor Night: "A Jug of Wine and Thou—The Rhetoric of Relationships," featuring Hans Guth, Gabriele Rico, and Scot Rice.

Registration fees: CCCC members, $50 ($60 on-site).

For registration information write 1991 CCCC Conference, 1111 Kenyon Road, Urbana, IL 61801.

22-24 March 1991. NATIONAL BLACK WRITER'S CONFERENCE: NEW DIRECTIONS FOR BLACK LITERATURE IN THE 21st CENTURY. Medgar Evers College.

For information contact Elizabeth Nunez-Harrell, Humanities Division, Medgar Evers College, CUNY, 1650 Bedford Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11225.

11-14 April 1991. TWENTY-SECOND ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF CALIFORNIA TEACHERS OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (CATESOL). Santa Clara Convention Center and Doubletree Hotel, Santa Clara, CA.

Conference Theme: "California on the Move: Creating Strategies for the '90s." Featured topics of the more than 150 presentations, workshops, speakers, and panels include Reading and Vocabulary, Cultural Diversity, ESL in the Workplace, Learning Styles and Strategies, and Whole Language.

One or two units of academic credit may be earned through San Jose State University. For further information contact Kara Rosenberg, (415) 493-1236 or 858-0367.

11-14 April 1991. ASSOCIATION FOR ASIAN STUDIES: FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE. New Orleans, Louisiana.

For information write AAS, 1 Lane Hall, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI 48109.

11-13 April 1991. MULTI-ETHNIC LITERATURE OF THE UNITED STATES: AMERICAN VOICES—DISCOURSES OF RACE, GENDER, AND ETHNICITY. University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN.

For information contact Kent Bales, Dept. of English, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 55455.

3-4 May 1991. RENAISSANCE CONFERENCE OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA: STATE OF THE ARTS—RELIGION AND POLITICS IN RENAISSANCE CULTURE. Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

(CONFERENCES, Continued on Page 9)

TALKING BACK . . .

Hurrah for the Underground

by SCOTT LANKFORD
Foothill College

> Bah! But after all, even now I am lying! I am lying because I know myself as surely as two times two makes four, that it is not at all underground that is better, but something different, quite different, for which I long but which I cannot find! Damn underground!
>
> —Fyodor Dostoevsky,
> *Notes from the Underground*

After reading Margie Whalen's misguided rebuttal to Mark Hawkins' marvelous "Notes from the Underground" ["Talking Back," *inside english*, December 1990: 4], I feel compelled by a mingled sense of honor, outrage, and honesty to rise from my inexperienced instructor's high chair and shake my tiny fists in the defense of my esteemed colleague's obvious insincerity.

Clearly what we have here is a prime example of the old "intentional fallacy" so feared and hated by the (Conservative) New Critics. Just as none of us would ever allow our students to mistake the nihilist narrator of the original *Notes from the Underground* for Dostoevsky himself, we should also think twice before equating the opinions uttered by Hawkins' carefully constructed comic persona with Hawkins' actual opinions as a distinguished Progressive essayist and educator. The warnings of Dostoevsky's own infinitely ironic narrator must, in this sense, be taken as a caveat to Hawkins' hilarious humor here:

> I swear to you gentlemen, that I do not really believe one thing, not even one word, of what I have just written. That is, I believe it, perhaps, but at the same time, I feel and suspect that I am lying myself blue in the face.

As a newcomer to the community college system, I was frankly shocked to find how many otherwise sophisticated *inside english* readers apparently missed the point of Hawkins' poisonous little prank entirely. The first-person format of the article ought to have made the whole ruse perfectly plain. After all, what Hawkins presents us with here is a profoundly *personal* essay which nonetheless argues (eloquently!) that personal essays are themselves nothing but a form of dangerous doggerel which forces innocent students to submit to the disgusting "intellectual voyeurism" of prurient young English instructors such as myself (much as Hawkins has deemed it necessary to "confess" his alleged conservatism to us here). Never mind that Hawkins' own essay is itself deeply personal, even revelatory—and hence full of the passion, persuasiveness, and naked subjectivity that make the best personal writing so powerful. A personal essay that denounces personal essays? What wit! What creativity! What humor! I ask you: what could possibly be funnier than that?

For those who doubt my own sincerity in this matter, I ask you to consider Hawkins' own personal practice as a proudly Progressive essayist and educator.

For example, Ms. Whalen apparently thought her old pizza partner meant every single word he said about the perils of peer editing when, in fact, we all know that Hawkins, like any experienced writer, would never dream of writing anything without it. In the case of "Notes from the Underground," for example, Hawkins was careful to circulate early drafts of his personal essay to his peers here in the Foothill English Department for comment and criticism long before submitting a much-improved final draft to the *inside english* editors. When the finished article appeared in print [*inside english*, May 1990: 1+], Hawkins (like any author) was also extremely anxious to learn what the reactions of his wider audience would be; he even took the time to respond in writing to Whalen's published rebuttal. What do you call "peer editing" and "process writing," if not that?

True, Hawkins' students do occasionally complain about the severity of his standards. Why? Because as one American Indian student, a veteran of one of Hawkins' rare remedial writing classes, recently confided, "Hawkins made me *rewrite* every single goddamned essay before giving me an A." Can you find a more clear-cut case of Progressive pedagogy leading to cancer of the colon and terminal grade inflation than that?

Of course the ultimate litmus test of any true educational conservative is the fierce debate over the place of Western culture in the curriculum. Yet here again, unlike his fictional counterpart, the REAL Mark Hawkins actually *volunteered* to amend his popular introductory humanities to allow for an on-going comparison between Chinese and Western cultures. Apparently Bennett, Bloom, Hirsch, and other genuinely conservative educators will have to look elsewhere for allies, just as Whalen and other self-confessed "Progressives" (including myself) will have to look elsewhere for antagonists—at least as long as Hawkins' self-ironic sense of humor remains intact.

As for the Conservative pedagogical program advocated by Hawkins' dubious double, the sublimely sarcastic narrator of Dostoevsky's original *Notes from the Underground* perhaps sums it up best when he says:

> The long and the short of it is, gentlemen, that it is better to do nothing! Better conscious inertia! And so hurrah for the underground.

Scott Lankford is the co-director of Foothill College's new Cultural Diversity Center, in addition to teaching American Literature, English 1A, and 1B. He is also a PhD candidate in Modern Thought and Literature at Stanford University.

"Red" Tape, or Correcting with Cassettes (Part 2)

by GLORIA HELLER
Santa Monica College

I teach writing to the so-called underprepared student, and I am perpetually on the lookout for alternative ways to "reach" my students, many of whom have turned off to conventional education methods. I was interested, therefore, in Steve Flick's article about using audio-cassettes for feedback on writing assignments ["Overcoming 'Feedback Block': Using Audio-Cassettes in Writing Classes," *inside english*, May 1990:3.] The idea of using the aural channel instead of the usual visual channel, *i.e.* written comments in margins, also attracted me since I teach my students about learning-style differences, so they can help themselves to find their own best ways to learn.

Late in Spring Semester, 1990, after my students had become accustomed to my style of written feedback on their essays (highly personalized checklists), I asked them to hand in a thirty-minute cassette tape with their final-draft autobiographies. I did not tell them why, nor did I tell them this was an experiment, because I did not want to influence their responses to the questionnaire (modeled on Flick's) that I would give them later.

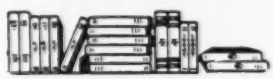
STUDENT REACTIONS

From the students' perspective, as reflected in their questionnaires, my experiment was well-received. They liked hearing my voice (38 percent) because it was "more personal." Although 79 percent liked the format "a lot," only 59 percent felt it is "more effective than the checklists"; in fact, 31 percent felt the checklists are "equally effective" to the cassette feedback. In other words, even though 17 percent recognized that tapes are "good for a change," only 14 percent wanted tapes used for *all* essay feedback. The most frequently cited advantage was being able to "listen to it as many times" as they wanted (28 percent); an equal number of students complained, however, that the recording was "shorter than imagined." The most thoughtful suggestion was to "leave it as an option for a student to request."

MY REACTIONS

My own reaction to the experiment was curiosity about how useful *I* would find the method. Surprisingly, I discovered several drawbacks.

1) Using an oral delivery is limiting. I couldn't snack or yawn, sit in a squeaky chair, pause as frequently as I like to while reconsidering a point, do it too early in the a.m.



or too late in the p.m. (voice quality), do it in a park, on the bus, or in a laundromat (noise levels).

2) Most correction does not require lengthy explanation. I categorized comments ("organization," "development") and lectured on them in class immediately before I gave students the checklists. In addition, this course level has a lab in which students get assistance with understanding comments on papers.

3) My own preferred channel is visual and having to talk everything out on tape (to an invisible listener to boot!) was difficult for me. I was self-conscious about my verbal style on tape, even though I enjoy conferring with students "face-to-face." Probably because I felt unsure, the tapes took far more time than written comments—without the benefit of immediate clarification and feedback provided by interaction during a conference.

4) Technical glitches could mean considerable time wasted as well as needless repetition. Yes, it was, indeed, *my* hand that accidentally hit the button on my recorder that switches the tape speed to "long play" (15/16 IPS). Nevertheless, I was lucky that only one student from that class of twenty-three requested that I re-record his tape; the others kindly and gleefully told me they could "translate" from "chipmunk" to English.

Overall, I don't find this format compatible enough with my personal style or with this course level to use it more than once or twice a semester. In addition, I think it is most suitable for responding to personal expression, e.g. autobiography, journal. I am happy with the checklist format I have designed (which increases in complexity alongside the students' developing sense of writing), which I feel encourages a sense of autonomy with the written format that I want my students to achieve.

WRITING AS CONFUSION

(Continued from Page 1)

fit any number of prejudices. In its traditional sense, however, it has generally meant to learn enough history, philosophy, science, mathematics to be able to recognize some of what goes on around one and to gain enough ability to think things through, to analyze them, and to come to some objective (sort of) conclusions about the various events and personalities involved. In our reading and composition courses, we would contribute to this process by introducing students to the various problems of language and literature, to how different writers try to make some sense out of different events, to how to interpret in various ways what one reads and sees. We would show our students how people become educated by reading and writing. And none of this has anything to do with political and ideological correctness.

Reading and writing mean knowing the language, knowing words, knowing the relationships between words, phrases, sentences; how to get the meaning out of these; that is to say, out of the text. Getting the meaning out of a text presumes, of course, that there is meaning in the text: an idea that used to be quite popular with teachers of English, literature, and composition. If, for example, one were to read a story by Guy de Maupassant, one like *La Parure*, "The Necklace," one used to be able to get Maupassant's meaning without a great deal of trouble. But as Hugh Kenner says, in his own inimitable, ironic way, in an essay published in *Harper's* of August 1981 and collected in a recent book, *Mazes*,

> It may very well be the import of our age, that literature is not the text, does not contain its meaning, is merely what happens in some mind in the presence of a text. If so, then the choice of another mind to spend time with is crucial to your wellbeing. (73)

To adapt Kenner from another essay (referring to Jonathan Swift) in the same collection: "Where were you, Derrida, in [1884]" (258). The point is, of course, that the meaning (one is tempted to say Maupassant's intent) is quite easily decipherable. If some readers mean to get some different sense from the story, it may be that they may simply not like the story's thesis. No one ever said that readers were obliged to like an author's argument.

On the other hand, if a text does not contain its meaning, if the meaning is merely something that happens in the mind in the presence of a text, then why bother to read at all, or to teach students to write at all, to do either? Since a mind in the presence of a text (or in the presence of anything) will invent its own meaning anyway, I should think that it could invent its own meaning without the trouble of reading someone else's text.

More and more, courses both in writing and reading, and especially in literary courses, tend to be organized around theories of composition and criticism rather than around the texts produced (except when they show evidence of correct thinking) and the texts under investigation (except when they are of the correct provenance). It seems to me that we miss the basic point of our task as teachers. One also senses a contradiction: if a work of literature is only a text to be decoded, deconstructed, to have a critical (correct) theory applied to it, to mean only what the reader brings to it, why should we worry over which text we do it all to or which culture it comes from? Since the works we deconstruct would have nothing to teach us, since they are only texts, we had just as well deconstruct Great Works of Western Literature as great works from any culture or any work from any culture; it would seem to make absolutely no difference. Contrary to many of the prevailing opinions, though, one writer has clearly set out to defend Western works and their ideas:

> [I]t is simply foolish to deny that the history of the Greeks . . . is of incomparably greater significance than the deeds of Aztecs, African tribes, Moguls, or ancient Chinese—and precisely because of what ensued from that history[:] . . . the record of what a few Greeks said and did so long ago still resonates vibrantly in our own day—and not least for Latin Americans, Africans, Indians and Chinese. (Luttwak 60)

The trouble is that this approach smacks of elitism: the power elites controlling language (note: not one's own language) and the resulting political ideologies: and we cannot have that! One detects, however, a certain degree of paranoia in this notion: very few of the students I come into contact with have any sense of any power elite controlling their language. They speak and write as they damned well please, including not making any kind of sense if it pleases them not to do so, politically correct or not. The scholars in the field seem to have abstracted their own fears and prejudices to include the whole of society, but finally talk only to themselves. It would do them a world of good to come down from the clouds of their abstractions, to wander among the plebs, to face the grounds of reality. They might even reconsider the earlier sense of teaching composition and reading: to teach students the principles that have been known since the time of Aristotle (free of ideology) and let the students apply them as they will, which they tend to do anyway once they are out of our clutches. They may even apply them to such mundane things as applications for jobs or apply them, not to writing anything, but to understanding something about the world around them. They may even analyze what the compositionists say and do and discover that, in the end, what they do and say amounts to very little. We would then leave our students free to make up their own minds about things, which was one of the great hues and cries of not too long ago. I have always been under the impression that one major reason for having people go to school was to make them independent thinkers, but if we can only deal in what is ideologically correct, or leave a mind in the presence of a text to interpret it as it will, then it seems to me that our intent is to narrow their fields of enquiry and their perspectives, to require that they see the world in only one way: the way we want them to. By doing so, we are not empowering them: quite the contrary: we make them very much vulnerable to the power of others and not the least to ourselves. And, in the end, neither do they learn to write very well.

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Luttwak, Edward N. "Athens vs. Sparta." [A review of several books on ancient Greece by Donald Kagan]. *Commentary* March 1989: 60ff.

Gordon Taylor has taught English and other foreign languages for a number of years at Yuba College and has participated in other college-wide activities, including Faculty Senate and Faculty Association. In addition, he is Secretary of ECCTYC and its liaison to the statewide Academic Senate.

ROSENBERG'S RAT

"Droll rat, they would shoot you if they knew
Your cosmopolitan sympathies"
—Isaac Rosenberg,
Break of Day in the Trenches

When the trees are heavy
on me, and their hair,
backlit by street lamps,
is spread against distant
stars, and I wander
then in their darkness,
lost among turnings, their sudden
caves sealing me in,
I need to hear
the rustle of leaves
beneath my feet, and discover
a clogged storm drain,
a street rat shifting
debris.

Last week
at City College, the faculty
speaker, soaring among
service, commitment, and mission,
met his match: a casual
rat strolled the aisles
of the auditorium and sauntered
under the seats. The audience
rose in waves: a wash of respect
for something small
and primal.

Rosenberg
knew about that: how, even
in war, surrounded by our betrayal,
how swift we rise toward
our skies, until a rat
brings us back.

JIM EWING
Fresno City College

Mr. Ewing teaches writing—both expository and creative—full time at FCC. He hopes soon to finish his book of poems Escape from Scotland *and have it published in his native country.*

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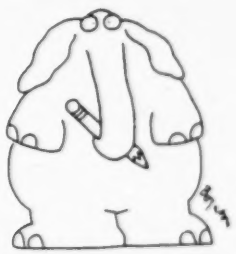
WRITING THE RESEARCH PAPER

Using Questions to Direct Research

by DIANE JEFFERSON
Cuesta College

My students have used questions to direct their research ever since my son, now a high school senior, was in seventh grade.

I had just purchased *Research Shortcuts* by Judi Kesselman-Turkel and Franklynn Peterson. I had barely checked the table of contents and skimmed the suggestions on using questions to simplify research when my son, an honors English student ready for his first venture beyond plagiarizing *World Book*, appeared at my elbow with the twin dilemmas that confront all researching writers: how to get started on a broad topic and how to manage the search for information. The direction



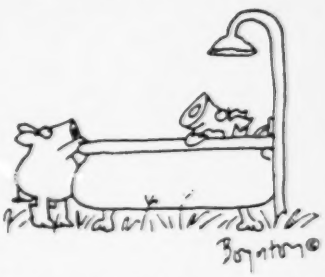
I gave him and the advice I have shared with hundreds of students since was merely an elaboration of Kesselman-Turkel and Peterson's ideas on preparatory reading and turning research needs into precise questions.

I suggested to my son that he start by spending two to three hours pre-researching—reading, thinking, and talking about his topic. As a result of this preparation, he returned with a general awareness of the topic and its issues. He had also made sure that sufficient resources were readily available and that the topic still interested him. Although he recorded bibliographic information on promising sources, he had not yet written a single note. He was not jumping right in with a stack of blank note cards and the compulsion to fill them. He would not jot down information on the off-chance it might be useful later. And he would not naively judge his progress on this research project by how many note cards he had filled. My students complete the same overview reading with the same positive results.

Once the preparatory reading was completed, my novice researcher was ready to develop questions emphasizing his research needs. To help him through this process, I asked some questions of my own. They were the same as those I pose to my students: "What do you want to know about this topic?" "What interests you about it?" "What compelled you to choose this topic?" Having grown up in a house without television, he wanted to investigate the effects of TV programs on elementary school students. I next asked, "What questions will lead you to discover the effects of television on elementary school children?" He formulated five or six questions such as "What is the effect of TV watching on how elementary school children interact with their families?" "Are scores on standardized tests affected by television viewing?" "Do educators see television as benefiting children? If so, how?"

The need to demonstrate and to guide students in this important part of the research process is easily overlooked by writing teachers for whom it is second nature. My son's English teacher had assumed honors students would either know or figure out how to begin researching. College English teachers make similar assumptions: These are college students; surely they have some research experience. Or alternatively, these are college students; they have sufficient critical thinking skills to focus topics for themselves. Not true. These students need all the help they can get. By taking the time to develop and revise questions, students direct their research to address a narrowed topic. The topic breaks down into smaller units, and consequently, the search for information becomes manageable.

Once the questions were precisely worded directives, my son wrote each one at the top of sheets of binder paper. Then he started to answer the questions—one at a time—on the binder paper. He used ink and wrote on only one side of the paper. (You can see the focus here: the student is not randomly reading for *any* information, but rather specifically reading to answer *only* the question posed at the top of the page. Using indexes and tables of contents is easy this way. So too is skimming for information. The question is right in front; a quick rereading helps the



"NOT THE USUAL HOGWASH!"

student decide if the information answers the question.) He paraphrased, summarized, or quoted directly depending upon the quality of the information and the use he saw for it later. Complete references to sources accompanied each answer. He knew when he was finished with the task because the question was answered to his satisfaction. When he had finished answering one of his questions, he was 20 percent of the way finished with his search. In short, he knew exactly where he stood.

This question technique makes writing the paper easier too. The questions become main

(QUESTIONS, Continued on Page 11)

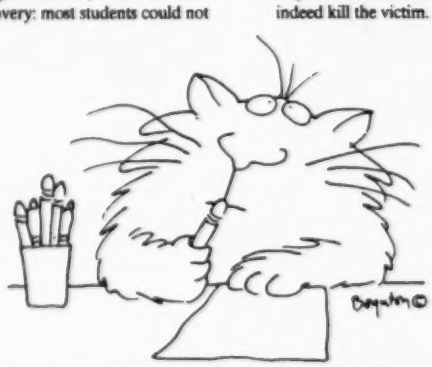
Paraphrasing Right and Left

by JOSEPH COLLIGNON
Fullerton College, Retired

For years I fought the library paper every time the subject came up in department meetings. When I received my fourth-round research paper on Pearl Buck, I was quite certain I had to do something; when I received a three-page paper on world religions—with Buddhism misspelled—I was absolutely certain. My solution: to teach a unit on paraphrasing *before* starting on the library paper.

I decided initially not to discuss the term "paraphrase" at any length nor did I mention summarizing at all. Instead I told them to put someone else's thoughts in their own words as completely as possible to sum up a particular demonstration or experiment found in an article. There were several reasons for this: I wanted to avoid the inevitable "How many words in a summary or in a paraphrase?" and (2) I wanted them to be able to write fluently. Incoming freshmen in a community college generally are *not* fluent writers. Besides, summarizing a passage demands that the student evaluate the materials, sort out that which is relevant and not relevant, and synthesize that information under a proper heading. For some students that virtually stops the pen in midair. Paraphrasing, on the other hand, develops fluency in expository writing in the same way that freewriting is a blessing for the blocked student writer. It's true that students initially will paraphrase irrelevant portions of an article, but in time they learn to discard excrescence and develop ideas and processes fully and with considerably less tension.

When I began that unit, I made a rather shocking discovery: most students could not



paraphrase competently. What happens when we read a paragraph to a group and ask them to paraphrase it? We run the gamut of responses, of course. Some do well; others are totally incoherent. Consider the range of responses to this paragraph, read aloud (twice) to a class of English 100 college freshmen:

> *Induction* is the process by which we accumulate evidence until, at some point, we can make the "inductive leap" and thus reach a useful generalization. The science laboratory employs this technique; hundreds of tests and experiments and analyses may be required before the scientist will generalize, for instance, that polio is caused by a certain virus. It is also the primary technique of the prosecuting attorney who presents pieces of inductive evidence, asking the jury to make the inductive leap and conclude that the accused did indeed kill the victim. On a more personal level, of course, we all learned to use induction at a very early age. We may have disliked the taste of orange juice, winter squash, and carrots, and we were not too young to make a generalization: orange-colored food tastes bad.
>
> —Randall E. Decker,
> *Patterns of Exposition 6*

The responses ranged from this,

> Induction was investigated by lawyers, to see if it was causing something. Also citrus fruit was being exam because of its taste.

. . . to this,

> The paragraph talks about the word induction; what it means and how it is used. The word actually leads up to something. It gives you some idea about what's being said.

. . . and finally to this:

> Induction is a gathering of facts of information, then analyzed to come to one conclusion. Scientists use it before they say, for instance, what causes a disease. Lawyers use it to evaluate the evidence. Also most children might insist all orange-colored foods taste bad because of two or three they've tried and didn't like.

Before writing off the first response as totally incoherent, we should consider one thing: some students pick up certain items in a paragraph read—after all, there are lawyers and citrus fruit mentioned in the material—but they have difficulty making connections. The second paraphrase has all the connections, but there's nothing tangible on either end of the connector, like having tie-rods on a car but missing the wheels and steering ram. The third student can connect facts to a generalization governing those facts. It is precisely the problems with the first two examples that demonstrate the difficulty many students face with the library paper: they cannot paraphrase and so are forced either to plagiarize or to offer volumes of details

(PARAPHRASING, Continued on Page 11)

THE EVOLUTION OF A TEXT

by LAWRENCE BARKLEY
Mount San Jacinto College, Menifee Valley Campus

I habitually keep all editions of various textbooks that find their way to my office, and several texts on my shelves have made their way through seven, eight, nine, even ten editions. I hold on to these outdated texts because I am curious: first, to see how the text is evolving and, second, to better understand what the authors are trying to achieve at a given moment in the text's evolution. Upon receipt of a new edition (and when time permits) I'll pull several of the more recent editions from my shelves to see what changes have occurred: Have the authors reorganized the text? If so, does the new structure make the text easier to use or more difficult to use? Does it suggest the authors are moving in a new direction? Have the authors included new chapters (suggested by trends in composition research) or omitted old ones or rearranged exisiting ones or all three? Have the authors omitted favorite exercises or readings or included new ones? Are the new exercises as engaging or challenging as previous ones? Has the type face changed? Have they clarified previous ambiguities? The questions continue, and, at times, I am heartened by a new edition; at other times, disappointed.

When I received a copy of Donald Daiker, Andrew Kerek, and Max Morenberg's *The Writer's Options: Combining to Composing* (4th edition), I pulled the three previous editions from my shelf and proceeded to leaf back and forth among the quartet. A comparison of the four editions clearly illustrates that since its initial publication in 1979, the changes the authors have made have been, with few exceptions, for the better. The text's evolution demonstrates a greater clarity of concept and broadening of purpose. And with the fourth edition Daiker, Kerek, and Morenberg have honed their text to its sharpest.

Comparing the four editions (see Figure 1), readers will see that Daiker, Kerek, and Morenberg have been tinkering with the contents since the second edition, trying to realize the best organizational pattern for the tripartite structure and the units that comprise each part. The authors have been generally content with Part 1 as it has remained essentially unchanged through all four editions; students continue to practice sentence combining using various grammatical strategies: relative clauses, participles, appositives, absolutes, subordination, coordination, prepositional and infinitive phrases, and noun substitutes. It is Part 2 and Part 3 that have received the authors' attentions.

The first edition's Part 2, "Strategies," included the following units: "Rearrangement," "Repetition," "Emphasis," "Coherence," "Tone," and "Summing Up." And Part 3, "Beyond," offered the single unit "Toward Selecting and Organizing Ideas." Yet in the second edition these two sections are virtually reversed and each section renamed: Part 2 is now titled "Building Paragraphs" and Part 3 "Strategies." With the second edition, the authors envisioned, prepared, and presented a text that addressed more than just the sentence (as did the first edition), and by rearranging the two sections the authors were able i.e., invention and revision.

The fourth edition mirrors the third edition: part for part, unit for unit. Daiker, Kerek, and Morenberg have honed the fourth edition's organization and content to the sharpness they have been aspiring to since the third edition. These larger changes moved the textbook away from focusing primarily on the sentence to presenting a variety of discourse

I have substituted, after Part I, an * for the Unit number because with the various deletions and additions in editions 2, 3, and 4, the numbering system is no longer sequential. A dashed line indicates that particular edition has no equivalent chapter.

		4th ed.	3rd ed.	2nd ed.	1st ed.
Part	**1**	**SENTENCE STRATEGIES**	**SENTENCE STRATEGIES**	**STRUCTURES**	**STRUCTURES**
Unit	1	Warm Up	Warm Up	Warm Up	Warm Up
	2	Relative Clause	Relative Clause	Relative Clause	Relative Clause
	3	Participles	Participles	Participles	Participles
	4	Appositives	Appositives	Appositives	Appositives
	5	Absolutes	Absolutes	Absolutes	Absolutes
	6	Subordination	Subordination	Subordination	Summing Up
	7	Coordination	Coordination	Coordination	Prepositional Phrases
	8	Preposition/ Infinitive Phrases	Preposition/ Infinitive Phrases	Preposition/ Infinitive Phrases	Subordination
	9	Noun Subst.	Noun Subst.	Noun Subst.	Coordination
	10	———	———	Summing Up	Noun Subst.
	11	———	———	———	Summing Up
Part	**2**	**PARAGRAPH STRATEGIES**	**PARAGRAPH STRATEGIES**	**BUILDING PARAGRAPHS**	**STRATEGIES**
	*	Coherence	Coherence	Selecting & Organizing Ideas	Rearrangement
	*	Rearrangement	Rearrangement	Paragraph Patterns	Repetition
	*	Repetition	Repetition	———	Emphasis
	*	Emphasis	Emphasis	———	Coherence
	*	Tone	Tone	———	Tone
	*	Paragraph Patterns	Paragraph Patterns	———	Summing Up
Part	**3**	**DISCOURSE STRATEGIES**	**DISCOURSE STRATEGIES**	**STRATEGIES**	**BEYOND**
	*	Discovering & Generating Ideas	Discovering & Generating Ideas	Coherence	Toward Selecting & Organizing Ideas
	*	Selecting & Organizing Ideas	Selecting & Organizing Ideas	Rearrangement	———
	*	Using Details	Using Details	Repetition	———
	*	Revision	Revision	Emphasis	———
	*	———	———	Tone	———
	*	———	———	Summing Up	———

(Figure 1)

to include the paragraph within the book's scope. The authors were also moving toward a text that would allow students to study the whole composition, for in the second edition the authors introduce the section "Suggestions for Writing"—suggestions that elicit paragraph as well as whole-essay length responses.

With the third edition, the authors went back to the organizational pattern of the first edition, adding in Part 3 two new units ("Discovering and Generating Ideas" and "Revision") that reflected the growing trend in composition that writing focus on process, not product. The authors also renamed the section headings for this edition ("Sentence Strategies" rather than "Structures"; "Paragraph Strategies," not merely "Strategies"; "Discourse Strategies," not "Beyond"). The change in titles reflected a change in the text's vision: *The Writer's Options* would no longer focus on only the sentence. The text would clearly address larger units, i.e., the paragraph—given only a polite nod in the second edition—as well as other aspects of the composing process, strategies, hence, enlarging the text's scope and offering readers additional, effective composing techniques.

Yet while the fourth edition reflects the third edition's organization, the authors have revised "a series of unit introductions . . . so as to make the options available to student writers clearer and more accessible" (xiii). The greatest number of changes, however, have occurred in the exercises where the authors have introduced nine new sentence combining activities as well as "updated, refurbished, and in several instances completely redone" others (xiii). With the exception of Unit 6, "Subordination," which includes the same exercises as found in the third edition, each Unit in Part 1 of the fourth edition offers writers a new exercise. The exercises in Part 2, "Paragraph Strategies," remain unchanged from those in the third edition. There is one new exercise in Part 3. While several of the omitted exercises are personal favorites, overall the new exercises, such as "Have You Lost Your Marbles?" "Odd Couples," and "Double Dare," are engaging and challenging and will not interrupt or distract from the text's effectiveness.

Another unwavering fixture among the last three editions is the addendum: "Suggestions for Writing." The authors offer topics focused on narration (twenty topics), description (twenty topics), explanation (thirty topics), and argumentation (thirty topics). Among the one hundred topics only one is truly new (the authors have updated another to include more recent television programs). One would think that in the eight years since the publication of the second edition, the authors and/or their graduate students could have, if not changed many of the topics, at least added several new ones to each section.

A final constant is the appearance of the text. The authors are still conscientious in their use of white space, and they continued to identify key words, phrases, and clauses with bold print.

But not all has remained essentially uniform. Through the first three editions, *The Writer's Options* presented a puzzle (first edition) or a geometric shape (second and third editions) in various stages of completion at the beginning of each unit. The design's development continued throughout the section until by the end of it, the puzzle or shape was complete. A new puzzle or shape began the next major section. This pictorial metaphor reflected the text's vision: through sentence combining (using various grammatical and rhetorical strategies) a writer could create larger, more sophisticated, more effective units. The visual image and the sentence combining concept worked together. The fourth edition does away with this.

The cover of the most recent edition illustrate's Bertrand Dorny's "Train Bleu." A piece, and always the same piece, of Dorny's etching adorns the beginning of each section and each unit. The picture never changes, never grows, is never complete.

This particular change might not be worth much more than a footnote if it weren't for the irony inherent in it. In France the Train Bleu or Blue Trains are special cars: specifically, they are sleeper cars that carry people between Paris and Nice. While passengers are passing through some of the most beautiful country in France, they are missing it for they are asleep. The previous three editions' pictoral metaphors suggested growth and activity on the students' part as they moved from one unit to the next; as the puzzle grew, so did the students. The new pictoral metaphor suggests inactivity, the students travelling from one unit to the next, dormantly, never knowing what they have passed.

(REVIEWS, Continued on Page 8)

NINE EASY STEPS

How To Teach English 1A

by JACK JACKSON

Diablo Valley College

English 1A is a requirement. English 1A needs to be taught. You've been hired for your expertise, your desire, your knowledge, your energy. Here are some tips.

1) **Assume a lot.** Assume that your students are adequately prepared, highly motivated, and interested. Assume that they have been assessed and tested and counseled until they have been whittled down to the cream of the crop. Order a challenging "college level" text and an interesting non-fiction work. Try to avoid ordering the dullest of rhetorics.

2) **On the first day of class, hand out your syllabus,** keeping in mind that you will need extra copies. Assume that your students will read it, understand it, follow it faithfully, and lose it. When absent students call and leave a message asking for the missed assignment, don't tell them to look for it on the syllabus; give them the benefit of the doubt. Smile when you give them the assignment, even though they can't see you over the phone.

3) **Assign readings.** Assume your students will complete them before the class discussion. Assume they have looked up words they didn't know. Assume that as they read, they pondered the reading and will come to class prepared to dissect and analyze the subject. Assume interest. Come to class and open the discussion. When the students can't, won't, or don't respond, worry that it is you. Maybe you're getting old, soft, spongy. Maybe you're not, but let it worry you so much that it affects your teaching. Worry that you are out of touch with the youth of today. After all, from your youth you certainly know how hard it is to trust anyone over thirty. Worry that between this semester and last semester your teaching abilities have deteriorated. Reconsider the idea of opening a flower stand or just retiring.

4) **Take attendance.** Explain the absence policy, yours and the school's, and how much attendance and participation will affect final grades, how important they are to a "good" class. When students ask how they are doing so far, grit your teeth. Smile and say, "Great! Keep up the good work!" Suppress any urge to ask why they bother to come to class when there are obviously more important things to do.

5) **Explain "sentence skills."** Say, "Sentence skills are an integral part of your paper. You must at least be aware of their existence and how to correct them. I will not proofread your papers for you after the second week, and I will count off one full grade if there are more than three errors per page." Smile heartily, as if you were being the nicest person you've ever met. When students protest over too many red marks, smile again. It really isn't your fault. It just seems like you're being too tough.

6) **Explain "thesis."** Explain "topic sentence." Explain, explain, explain. It really isn't your fault.

7) **Urge your students to study.** Urge them to seek help in tutorial centers. Urge them to "practice." Urge them to consult the rhetoric, even though it is the most boring book they've ever seen. Urge them to form study groups with two or three other students, if they can fit such a thing into their already too busy schedule. Urge them to read their papers aloud, if possible, and aloud to each other, if possible. Urge, urge, urge.

8) **Be very surprised when they give you "poor" marks on your evaluations.** Act hurt yet proud when your name gets around as being "too hard." You were. You worked them as hard as you could. You gave them Cs and Ds, which was mighty generous. They deserved less, if possible. They blame you, of course. "You didn't explain what you wanted," they will wail. Tell them (again) that it's really not so much what you want. That you don't set standards. You merely uphold them. Smile, and try to look as sincere as you feel. At least, try to look as sincere as you think you still feel.

9) **At last take your final exams back to your office,** if you have one, then home, where you will spend the first hours of your semester break correcting them. Don't despair. You only have two more shopping days until Christmas, and ten working days until if all starts again. Cheer up.

Jack Jackson has been teaching for the past three years at City College of San Francisco, College of Alameda, and Diablo Valley College. Before becoming a college English instructor, he taught special education for seven years in a variety of settings, mostly in Richmond and Berkeley. He also has organized a reading and discussion group for readers of Latin American novels and poetry through La Pena Cultural Center in Berkeley.

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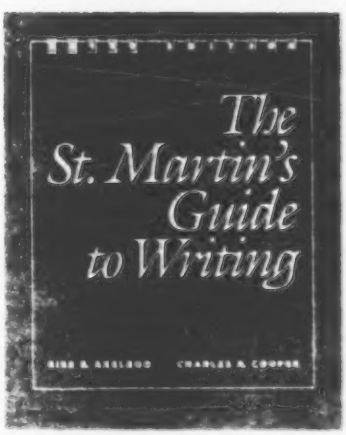

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REVIEWS

(Continued from Page 6)

But there is another visual change that is more distressing than the loss of watching a puzzle develop over several chapters and the pictoral metaphor associated with it. The type face and type size in the fourth edition make the text difficult to read. The third edition used a type face called Souvenir Light, a semi-serif faced type. The fourth edition uses Century Expanded, a serif faced type. Moreover, in order to cut down on the number of pages in the fourth edition (the text had been growing since the first edition: from 355 pages to 388 pages to 414 pages), the type size decreased from 11-point in the third edition to 10-point in the fourth edition (reducing the text to 334 pages, a substantial reduction from the three previous editions). Going to a smaller type size as well as to a serif faced type may have accomplished the goal of reducing the number of pages in the text, but this change has also made the fourth edition less readable, less accesible to the student.

Yet, even with this last disturbing distraction, Daiker, Kerek, and Morenberg have over four editions shaped and honed *The Writer's Options* into a text that can aid students in making intelligent decisions when composing sentences, paragraphs, and complete essays. This new edition of *The Writer's Options* can help students successfully develop into effective, not merely correct, writers.

☐ Daiker, Donald A., Andrew Kerek, and Max Morenberg. *The Writer's Options: Combining to Composing*. 4th ed. New York: Harper and Row, 1990. 334 pages. $11.00.

THE PRACTICAL ESSAY

by **HENRY WELSH**
Los Angeles City College

"Thirty years ago, *The Practical Stylist* changed the tune for textbooks by laying out for the first time the simple poetics of the persuasive essay and the process of writing one. It has remained a model ever since." This is according to author Sheridan Baker in the preface to the seventh edition of his ever popular composition handbook (Harper

and Row, 1990). What has worked in the past apparently still works. He believes that you can teach effective essay writing virtually by formula. His is the five-paragraph argumentative essay with a beginning, middle, and end—the kind of writing that many students expect to be taught, the kind rule-oriented teachers love to teach.

Baker writes with a warm, sometimes lofty, paternal tone in a style rich in imagery that both invites and demands the reader's attention: "Writing perfects thoughts and speech. Indeed, over the millions of years from our first emotive screams and gurgles of pleasure to the bright dawn of literature, writing—thinking well-dressed—seems to be where speech has been going all the time" (2).

It's clear throughout that he appreciates the difficulty of the task at hand yet still expects nothing less than clarity, forcefulness, economy, gracefulness, ease, and fullness from all writing.

The first section briefly mentions general considerations of essay writing including audience, writing with conviction, and heavy handedness ("Do not lose your personality and your voice in the monotone of official prose.") (3).

Also discussed is the important distinction between the written and spoken word ("Hoojaeatwith" doesn't translate well to prose), the necessity of a firm viewpoint, and an explanation of why persuasion is, after all, the point of nearly all our written (and spoken) communication and thus the center of any composition course using this text. Baker does give some space to revision and style in chapter one; however, it is never quite as clear how one develops what to write as it is later when he gives detailed instruction on how to manipulate ideas once they appear.

Chapter two provides helpful guidance in turning a general subject into a specific thesis with which to focus the whole essay. "Instead of dealing with things, subjects and pieces of subjects, you will be dealing with an idea and its consequences" (20). Part of this section suffers from vague references to the "process" of writing: "The process of writing will usually discover the holes in a weak thesis and show the way to its, and the paper's, revision" (23).

If, as Baker states repeatedly, the problem with poor student essays is that they have little or no effective structure, chapter three outlines the solution. He provides argumentative tactics, including a "Pro-Con" diagram of "acknowledging and disposing of the opposition" as well as advice on how to structure point by point running comparisons (31-36). A few concise exercises at the end of this and all chapters (except the first) give students an opportunity to practice what Baker preaches.

Baker enunciates the specifics of his essay blueprint starting in chapter four where the student learns that each paragraph is in effect a mini-essay with its own beginning, middle, and end. Each paragraph must begin with a topic sentence, with the exception of the opening paragraph—which should start with an "opening invitation" that "funnels" down to the thesis statement in the last sentence—and the concluding paragraph which should resemble the opening funnel only inverted (43).

Thus, the student is presented with an essayistic pattern that "works out in convenient detail the inevitability of Aristotle's Beginning, Middle and End" (53). An essay built following these simple guidelines can, according to Baker, be seen as a "keyhole." Throughout, Baker presents simple diagrams as well as sample student essays that illustrate the basic structure.

Chapter five reviews the standard rhetorical modes of developing body paragraphs while chapter six discusses "straight and crooked thinking," including logical fallacies and the place of opinion. Both chapters are full of clever, illustrative examples as well as relevant exercises with many possible variations.

Chapters seven and eight, which analyze sentence structure, are essentially unchanged. Baker spends an appropriately long time examining the perennial sentence devils: subordination, parallel construction, and wordiness.

Chapter nine focuses on individual words. Baker suggests several ways to build an impressive vocabulary based on words with "dash" and "tangible qualities." The new section explaining denotation and connotation is a useful addition to the already effective discussion of euphemism, metaphor, allusion, and diction.

Chapter ten, which presents the research paper, concludes the composition portion of this concise, engaging book. New to this section of essential research technique (MLA only) is help on making an on-line computer search.

Chapters eleven, twelve, and thirteen approach "the trouble with grammar," punctuation and spelling, and usage, respectively, in a basic handbook reference that closes out the text. Entertaining as he informs, Baker humorously incorporates rules of grammar and usage into the explanatory text: "The dash allows you to insert—with a kind of shout!—an occasional exclamation" (228). There are plenty of faulty and revised sentences that clearly illustrate often confusing rules. These wide-ranging examples of likely usage offset the sometimes dense language of theory: "Use a nominative pronoun as subject of a noun clause" (203).

If *The Practical Stylist* seems too mechanical for some, it no doubt will continue to provide a valuable service to those who desire more guidance than the current "holistic" approach to composition instruction provides. Although spending more time on clarity and the formulation of a thesis than on the purpose of writing and how the **need** to express ourselves informs the very essence of all writing worth reading, Baker makes a valuable contribution by "simply describing the natural linguistic facts discovered again and again by the heirs of Aristotle . . . " in which lineage all of us inescapably belong (x).

☐ Baker, Sheridan. *The Practical Stylist*. Seventh Edition. New York: Harper & Row, 1990. 291 pages.

Mr. Welsh teaches reading and composition, evaluates placement test essays, and tutors in the writing lab at Los Angeles City College.

WRITING: SOMETHING NEW

by **MARIAN OLSON**
Antelope Valley College

Mary Sue Koeppel, honored as a master teacher by Roger Garrison, has written *Writing: Resources for Conferencing and Collaboration*, an English composition text which in time may be considered a classic. After using the text one semester, I have concluded *Writing* is a field mined with gold.

Several years ago I participated in Garrison's Master Teacher's Workshop in Portland, Maine. It was there that I met Koeppel, one of the presenting teachers. I was struck then by the power of her classroom technique and ability to motivate our group of discriminate instructors. A teacher's teacher, Koeppel had us working to capacity in little time, and enjoying it!

Now, ten years later, Mary Sue Koeppel has pulled together those techniques in *Writing*, a dream come true for the beleaguered composition teacher whose patience and creative thread are stretched to breaking.

What I've found especially appealing is the way the text can be adapted to a variety of teaching styles. For those who are classicists and comfortable with the rhetorical approach, Koeppel has set up her book to accommodate them. For those who prefer the

(REVIEWS, Continued on Page 10)

SALAD DAYS

I drive to the classroom
where I say to fifty kids,
I want you to care about writing.
They grip their desks,
sweat between fingers.
She's going to test us
in two weeks, they think, die,
die, before you fail us
and we repeat this writing,
this caring your throw
in our steel faces and marble eyes.
We are born of Reagan's belly
and nursed on tits of Bush.
We have expensive neon skateboards
and jackets to match.
One boy in the corner sucks
the top of his pen and watches me.
Would you care for a salad? he asks.

KATE GALE HARPER
Antelope Valley College
Glendale College

Ms. Harper teaches part time at six community colleges in the Los Angeles area. She hopes to get a full-time job soon and have her book of poems published.

$ACRAMENTO $CENE

As the Cycle Turns: Similarities, Variations and Themes

by GORDON TAYLOR
Yuba College

As the new year begins, two cycles in the State's government coincide: the four-year cycle (a new governor takes office) and the two-year cycle (a new legislature takes its seat). In addition, the annual cycle of how things will be done and who will do them runs its course. The variations this year are the new faces in Sacramento and the recently passed propositions that will change the way the Governor and the Legislature carry out their duties. The theme, for the moment anyway, is cooperation. The principal similarity is in the budget: the perpetual shortage of money—and this year it has its own variation, a severe short fall in revenues projected to be somewhere between $6 and $10 billion dollars.

On 9 January, our new Governor, Mr. Wilson, delivered his State of the State speech that both Republicans and Democrats praised as "tough and caring." Even Willie Brown was not too heavily critical. It's all enough to make one a little nervous.

More to the point, though, the Governor revealed his budget proposal the next day, and it was not quite as well received as his speech the previous day: some freezes and cuts; no COLAs (cost of living adjustments) for the State's employees and workers at the universities nor for the aged, blind, and disabled receiving supplemental Social Security Insurance payments; reductions of 8.8 percent in AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children), of $50 in the renter's credit; eliminations of a $38.5 million program assisting homeless people; and, the one that we are most interested in, suspension of Proposition 98, the school funding proposition passed by the voters a few years back.

He proposed to raise registration fees for cars $5, for driver's licenses $2 for $781 million; taxes on beer, wine, and hard liquor 9, 4, and 26 cents per bottle respectively for $190 million; sales taxes on candy, snack foods, newspapers, and magazines for $384 million; and the last, and of concern to us, increases in fees for college; $325 to $1,949 for the University of California (UC), $156 to $936 at California State University (CSU), and $6 per unit to a maximum of $60 per semester at the community colleges (CCs). The schools, K-12, would get 37.6 percent of the State's budget; higher ed, 13.6 percent; health and welfare, 32.3 percent; and the rest divvied up among a number of other programs and agencies. Many legislators (Democrats) were not pleased to hear of the proposed cuts in welfare and aid to the homeless people; some are vowing that these will never make it out of the Legislature. And others (Republicans) were not pleased with the idea of raising the taxes. Has much really changed, after all? Many did say, though, that it was a "good faith proposal that makes the best of an impossible situation" and that they would work with Mr. Wilson to make the budget better.

Needless to say, the educational establishment was upset. K-12 will get an increase of 5 percent to $16.26 billion, UC a reduction of $1.8 million for $2.13 billion in general funds, and CSU a reduction of 2.5 percent for $1.6 billion. The CCs would get an increase of 1 percent to $1.8 billion.

On the other hand, the Governor proposed more money for a range of social services: prenatal and well baby care, Head Start, women who are parents and take drugs, health

and social services and school services, mental health counseling in elementary schools, family planning services, evaluating the performances of teachers and students, and an anti-drug program in junior and senior high schools. If all these proposals are adopted and if they work as anticipated, then they should have a long range, positive effect on the schools.

He proposed a ten-point program to give children a better start in health and education, improve the physical and mental health of both pregnant women and children, provide a drug-free environment, add revenues without any general tax increases (close a few loopholes, raise taxes on alcohol, increase some fees, that sort of thing). The budget will contain provisions to balance it over a period of eighteen months with a prudent reserve of $1.4 billion and some kind of long term reform. He also laid out some proposals to deal with criminals: life sentences for those selling drugs to pregnant women, tripling sentences for rapists, adding fifteen years to sentences for drug dealers selling to children.

None of this, of course, is the way things will turn out. The budgeting process is very complex and lots of people and committees involve themselves. This is only the primary proposal. The Legislature will do its work; there will be a revision in May (the May revise); the Legislature will produce a final document by 15 June (but we should not hold our breath; last year it was late July), send it to the Governor for his emendations and signature by 1 July.

Meanwhile, the CCs are reported to be gaining in favor nationwide because they are cheaper and convenient, classes are often smaller, hours are flexible, the students get more personal attention, and they are increasingly emphasizing teaching and academic quality, are not research institutions, have no teaching assistants—all the stuff that we have known for years. More potential students, it seems, are catching on. For us in California, though, times are tough: last fall, the Chancellor's Office projected that the system would need a bunch of new campuses and centers. That number is now up to thirty-one by 2005, some would be in full swing by 2000, and the total cost around $3.2 billion.

The Legislature is in a big tizzy because of Proposition 140, the one that limits the number of terms its members can serve and places financial limits on how much it can spend to operate itself. The legislators are squabbling over who gets to spend how much, and Willie Brown seems to have taken control. They have also threatened to file a law suit to have the proposition overthrown on constitutional grounds. They maintain that it amounts to a revision of the constitution itself rather than simply an amendment to it. Not having read it, I cannot say if the argument has any merit although no one seems to have questioned making the Legislature a full-time business back umpteen years ago when it went from two half-year sessions to two full years of operations. Many of the opponents of Proposition 140 said that it was a bad business because we would lose expert people and that it would become a completely politicized body, as if it weren't already a politicized as well as a political body.

Of course, the legislators are responsible for agreeing to the issues that bring our laws into being and for their complexity, having written and passed them in the first place, and having now two full years in which to do their deeds. A good many of them are lawyers and so have an interest in the complexity of the law. They have the time to complicate things and now also require the time to deal with them because they are now complex, not to say complicated. Careers are also at stake, and one suspects that this is more the reason for those in the Legislature to be upset. Who really likes to be forced out of a job, and jobs in the Legislature tend nowadays to be careers since few incumbents are ever turned out of office. But, then, since when was an elective office meant to be a career in the first place? It would seem that one of the major aspects of a democratic system is that these jobs should be temporary to the extent that each person ought not to be reelected interminably. On the other hand, much has changed in the years since these matters were first considered and written in to our basic documents.

CONFERENCES

(Continued from Page 2)

For information contact Stanley Stewart, Dept. of English, UC Riverside, Riverside, CA 92521-0323.

2-4 June 1991. 1991 SUMMER INSTITUTE FOR TEACHERS OF LITERATURE. Ocean Creek Resort and Conference Center, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.

Topic: "Critical Theory and Practice: Implications for the Curriculum and Pedagogy." Participants will be in workshops with and hear talks by Barbara Christian (UC Berkeley), Gerald Graff (Northwestern University/University of Chicago), Robert Scholes (Brown University), Brenda Green (Medgar Evers College, CUNY), Joseph F. Trimmer (Ball State University), and Tilly Warnock (University of Wyoming).

Tuition: $300. Deadline for registration: 15 April 1991.

For further information and registration materials, write College Section Summer Institute, NCTE, 1111 Kenyon Road, Urbana, IL 61801, or call Don Robbins, (217) 328-3870.

20-22 June 1991. SEVENTH ANNUAL YOUNG RHETORICIANS' CONFERENCE. Monterey Peninsula College, Monterey, CA.

Maxine Hairston (University of Texas) will deliver the keynote speech; Gabriele Rico (San Jose State University) and Sheridan Blau (UC Santa Barbara) will present a Saturday morning session on "Literature and the Personal Response." Other sessions include workshops on "Responding to Student Writing" (Kim Flachman, CSU Bakersfield), "Composing as a Woman" (Elizabeth Flynn, Michigan Tech), and "Moving Toward the Interactive Classroom" (Judith Stanford, Rivier College, New Hampshire), and sessions exploring "Writing about Literature in the Two-Year College" (Bill Lay, Kalamazoo Valley Community College), "Rethinking The Canon" (Elaine Apthorp, San Jose State University), and "The Professional Self-Image of Composition Teachers (Hans Guth, SJSU).

Fees: $40. For more information call Hans Guth (408) 924-4435 or Gabriele Rico (408) 646-4100 or write them at Department of English, San Jose State University, One Washington Square, San Jose, CA 95192-0090.

16-28 July 1991. SEWANEE WRITER'S CONFERENCE. University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee.

Workshops in poetry, fiction, and playwriting with, among others, Ellen Douglas, Ernest Gaines, Tina Howe, Donald Justice, Howard Nemerov, Tim O'Brien, Monroe K. Spears, William Styron, Peter Taylor. Fellowships and scholarshpis are available.

For further information contact Wyall Prunty, Sewanee Writers' Conference, 310P St. Luke's Hall, Sewanee, TN 37375, (615) 598-1141.

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

inside english is planning future issues that will focus on the following topics:

Cultural/Ethnic/Gender/Age Diversity

(SUBMISSIONS, Continued on Page 13)

WRITERS AND THEIR READERS

Wrestling With the Audience

by ANNE HUBER STARK
Ohlone College

One of the themes at the Young Rhetorician's Conference in Monterey in June 1990 was the reevaluation of the reader's role in student writing. Analysis of the importance of the reader has been given half-serious attention among composition teachers for some time; however, current studies such as the one conducted by UC Berkeley's Center for the Study of Writing (CSW) show remarkable results in both the writing styles and the attitudes of student writers when these writers have a real audience for their essay assignments. Dr. Sarah Freedman, director of CSW, spoke at this year's conference about a correspondence project between inner-city high school English classes in the East Bay area and the environs of London, England. In her presentation, accompanied by an article from CSW's *The Quarterly* entitled, "Exchanging Writing, Exchanging Cultures," Freedman argues convincingly that the students' writing skills, interest in the subject, and overall ability improve substantially when they begin to care about the audience of their essays. She writes, "They build social connections to writing; and on this firm base, their academic writing can grow and develop" (2).

There is a tendency in teaching composition to try to elicit an objective style from beginning writing students. This style can be mastered by most students throughout the course of a semester, but it has the serious drawback of encouraging students to disengage themselves. This disengagement didn't happen in Dr. Freedman's project because the students thought of their essays as letters to the English audience. The students drew upon their vast and often picaresque personal experience for their essays, from which, working in peer groups, they ferreted out the best material. The English audience was moved and delighted.

An audience does not have to come from across the oceans, however, to be an effective motivator for students. I discovered the possibility of incorporating a real audience within the limited sphere of students and teacher after reading a textbook called *Writing: The Translation of Memory*. This text, edited by Eve Shelnutt of Ohio University, contains a series of thirty-three essays written primarily by students. Each of the essays is cross-referenced in terms of rhetorical strategy, but none of the chapters discusses rhetoric. The special feature of this reader is that each essay is followed by an additional essay written by the same writer narrating the process of composing his/her essay.

The process essays are immensely engaging. They have the spirit and commitment that any writing teacher would hope to see in his/her beginning students' first essays. When composing them, these writers obviously had a clear sense of purpose, and they seemed to be intensely aware of their respective audience. In her introduction Shelnutt writes, "These essays forced students to ask themselves: What did I do in that particular piece of writing? What did I think of as I constructed it? How did I use memory in its formation? How did the writing develop and change as it took shape? How do I evaluate it now?" (Shelnutt iii). In answering these questions the students seemed to be addressing not a general reader but a specific reader—the reader of their original essays.

I was so impressed by this idea that I decided to incorporate it in one of my composition classes at the end of the year. The initial project was to research and argue in four or five pages a controversial topic having to do with home, school, or work. The second project was to write about the process of preparing that paper. My goal was to get the students to write to me specifically while addressing a rhetorical subject. This subject should be one in which they had a personal stake—their own research papers.

In the first essay the students chose a general audience, similar to that in their other writings throughout the semester. In the second essay they wrote to a specific audience, the reader of their first essay—me. I could sense from the essays that deliberately writing to an audience while using a rhetorical strategy was new to them. Many of the students were tentative at first, writing about the grade they had expected to get but did not. Further in the essays, however, I noticed a transformation in style, a commitment to the subject that I had not witnessed in their writing up to this point. One female student wrote about her own situation as an adopted child that caused her to choose the topic of open adoptions. A Hispanic student, who admitted in his essay that he had trouble "finding motivation to write" throughout the semester, wrote this candid justification for his choice of argument topic in his process essay:

> The hardest thing for me to do was find a subject. There are so many important issues out there in the world that it was hard to choose. However, I found my dolphin subject by accident. I was watching Entertainment Tonight when they showed Sam LaBudde's video on the carnage he saw aboard the tuna boat. As soon as I saw that, something clicked and I knew I had found my subject.

There was humor in the essays ("I sat down at the Newsbank computer and typed in 'condoms' while looking over my shoulder to see if anyone was watching me.") and initial frustrations ("As it turned out, this type of data is deemed confidential and I could only get reliable data from P. Hospital, as my wife works in the Scribe Dialysis Unit there.") and later successes ("Not only do I feel much better after having put my thoughts on paper, I have also received support from the HealthCare Professionals for writing the paper. One of the nurses I interviewed . . . called me several days after the interview, willing to supply me with the confidential data, because she felt, 'it's about time somebody does something about this abuse.'")

Finally, I witnessed a new sense of control

coming from these students, the artists' pride in their own choices. On editorial decisions, one student wrote, "I didn't want to let so much good information go to waste. At the same time, I didn't want my essay to be just a statistical essay, [sic] I wanted it to be enjoyable and thought provoking." On the success of outlining, another student wrote eloquently, "I felt as if [my essay] was already written with invisible ink. All I had to do is write over the invisible ink."

In short, I enjoyed reading these essays as much as I had enjoyed the ones in Eve Shelnutt's reader. The original argument essays were good, but these were even better because the students allowed themselves to include both the objective support and their own feelings. The essays had an integral structure that was pleasing because it lacked both formulaic rigidness and gratuitous spontaneity. My students were finally successful in adapting to their audience, and I think the process was gratifying in itself.

Much work has yet to be done in the area of understanding the role of the reader, but the essays from Dr. Freedman's exchange, Eve Shelnutt's reader, and my own class show that giving students a real audience can be significant in getting them to care about their writing.

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Shelnutt, Eve. *Writing: The Translation of Memory*. New York: Macmillan, 1990.

Anne Stark taught part-time for two years at Ohlone College in Fremont, California. She graduated from Colorado State University with an M.A. in English, having completed the department's professional internship program.

She is currently in the midst of a transfer to Logan, Utah, where she hopes to continue teaching basic composition classes at Utah State University.

REVIEWS

(Continued from Page 8)

freedom to create assignments as they arise from the students' needs and curiosity, the text accommodates them. For those who are always looking for workable exercises to illuminate a writing technique, Koeppel has included a variety of exercises, enough to satisfy even the most hard-to-please instructor. As if that were not enough, *Writing* includes a rich variety of techniques for "getting started" and peer exercises at the end of each chapter.

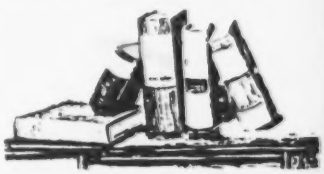
The problems of objective evaluation of a student's work and how thoroughly that information is received concern every composition teacher. Koeppel assists us here too. Not only does *Writing* contain excellent peer evaluation suggestions, it includes a check list for the student writer to fill out or consider before turning in a paper. These focused questions encourage self-evaluation and help the student edit papers with a more critical eye.

Writing is well organized. The instructor can use it easily for a sixteen-week course or a two-semester writing course—Koeppel has included a suggested weekly schedule. If the instructor wishes to use *Writing* as a reference only, the text works as well that way for teacher and student alike. Writing projects included range from journal writing to essays to mastering essay tests. The text includes a comprehensive index.

Considering the plethora of composition texts that are issued annually, we know how difficult teaching writing is. Each author has an answer to the problems faced by teacher or student or both. Most of them fail. After twenty-one years of teaching composition and reviewing innumerable writing texts, I believe *Writing* will be a classic. It certainly deserves to be.

☐ Koeppel, Mary Sue. *Writing: Resources for Conferencing and Collaboration*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1989. 305 pp.

After completing a sabbatical and publishing Facing the Wind, *a book of poems (Raven Press, 1990), Marian Olson returned to Antelope Valley College this fall (1990) to teach writing courses, which she has taught since 1970. A friend introduced her to Koeppel's* Writing: Resources for Conferencing and Collaboration *and suggested she might want to use it in her English 1A classes. She did. The book was a joy to work with. What English instructor would hoard the good news?*



BOOKS TO REVIEW

If you are interested in reviewing any of the following books, please notify the editor, Barbara Bilson Woodruff (see page 2 for the address). The book will be sent to you, and your review should be submitted within two months of receiving the book. Please follow the proper manuscript format.

Andrasick. *Opening Texts: Using Writing to Teach Literature*. Heinemann, 1990.

Benesch, ed. *ESL in America: Myths and Possibilities*. Boynton/Cook, 1991.

Bloom. *The Essay Connection: Readings for Writers*. 3rd. ed. Heath, 1991.

Graves, ed. *Rhetoric and Composition: A Sourcebook for Teachers and Writers*. 3rd. ed. Boynton/Cook, 1991.

Hashimoto. *Thirteen Weeks: A Guide to Teaching College Writing*. Boynton/Cook, 1991.

(REVIEWS, Continued on Page 12)

PARAPHRASING

(Continued from Page 5)

without a governing purpose for the paper or the transitions to connect the elements of the paper. These problems, I suspect, are endemic in Freshman Composition at the community college level, both with library papers *and* with the other required papers in the course.

METHOD

My certainty in this matter is nothing more than my own experience in learning how to paraphrase and several years of watching students progress from mediocrity to incompetence or from incoherence to mediocrity. The only "method" for training students to become competent paraphrasers is to encourage them, as I had to encourage myself, to read or listen for meaning, rather than memorize words left to right, top to bottom. To do this I first read aloud several single paragraphs to paraphrase; the students don't have copies of the material. Though many try to memorize what I am saying, they discover, soon enough, that it's impossible to remember words in a certain order but that it's quite possible to *hear* meaning and express that meaning either orally or on paper.

When we begin the library paper, I offer five sources that we paraphrase orally, sometimes on paper. Their library paper must include at least three of those sources plus one of their own. This may sound like "spoon-feeding," but many of these students do not recall ever having written a library paper. Those students have a chance to succeed. The really good students find sources of their own, sometimes ignoring mine totally, and write excellent papers often three times the minimum length.

The reason for this is simple: intelligent, verbal students do not wish to be put in the Procrustean bed of limits on sources and organization. Often they find that the topic ("Innovations in Education as a Result of Scientific, Psychological and Educational Research") offers opportunities to pursue, in depth, the progress in research on teaching dyslexics or on right- and left-hemispheric research in learning improvement. I make no attempt to restrain them.

This segment of English 100 has made the whole program much more enjoyable to teach. I once hated to see the library paper unit appear on the syllabus. That meant six weeks of teaching footnoting and primary and secondary sources and on and on and on with always the same result: a few students doing a fine job, the vast majority with bland generalizations about world religions or with obviously plagiarized commentary on Ezra Pound's *Cantos*.

THE THIRTY-DAY PLAN

The success of this program in English 100 led to another innovation, both in 100 and in remedial and sub-remedial English: the thirty-day plan. This plan called for the students to read aloud for twenty or thirty minutes a day, preferably a unit from the text in a course they were taking other than English. If that didn't work out, they were allowed to pick an article of interest to them in an area in which they hoped to work in the future. After reading the unit of text, they were to attempt to write what they had just learned, looking back to the text at any time they could not remember particular details.

The first entries in these paraphrasing attempts were, by and large, much like the first two examples of those students trying to define "induction." But by the eighth or ninth entry, things began to change. They began with a strained half-page but soon picked up the ease of writing down what they had just read with a page and a quarter or even two pages. Even in sub-remedial English, the results were the same. One student wrote what I thought to be one of the clearest descriptions of the process of mitosis I had ever read; another wrote (nineteenth entry) very clearly, with good development, on the B-complex vitamins. When I asked those students how they were doing in those classes which informed their notebooks, they said they were doing fine.

The advantage of the thirty-day plan—other than the obvious changes in student writing—is that these young people can write their understanding of articles and texts in an area of interest to them. Besides, the plan offers students a chance to do well in a subject area other than English *while* improving their reading and writing skills.

PARAPHRASING ACROSS THE DISCIPLINES

Teaching the art of paraphrasing should not be limited to the English department. A unit on paraphrasing could be the core of the Writing-across-the-Disciplines (WAD) movement. Surely there are psychology instructors and history instructors who must literally decipher some bluebook responses; every instructor who assigns term papers must receive some that are palpably plagiarized. But it's futile remonstrating with these students. Most of them simply don't know how to paraphrase. As long as WAD promoters—mostly English teachers, of course—are making the usual plea, "C'mon, you guys; we've got to share the burden," there will be little ground gained—unless that sharing is dictated by administrative authority. But all instructors who include term papers and bluebook exams could profit by sharing the burden. A few of the political science instructors here at Fullerton College have already begun to teach their students how to paraphrase, and they're letting us English instructors know in no uncertain terms that they're doing a job we've failed to do.

There's no reason, of course, we can't do the job together.

Kurt Vonnegut said this about his brother

Bernard, the atmospheric scientist: "We were given very different minds at birth. Bernard could never be a writer. I could never be a scientist." What Kurt is talking about here is a description of right- and left-hemispheric capabilities. In his novel *Slapstick* he envisions twins: Wilbur, who has a great gift for picking up bits of knowledge; Eliza, who can make intuitive leaps, capable of seeing the larger picture. They're idiots with single hemispheric capability, geniuses when the visionary, artistic, philosophic mind is combined with the logical, linear mind. That is the message of *Slapstick*: if we could but combine the minds of the scientist, the engineer, and the technician with the minds of the artist, the writer, the philosopher, then we could envision a future and begin to build it.

That's the big picture. There's also a smaller though no less rewarding view. Imagine a young lady in a sub-remedial course. That's sub-"bonehead" English. She has confided in an autobiographical sketch that she plans to become a doctor. Imagine how that vision can be dimmed by being placed in a sub-remedial English class. That probably doesn't require much imagination; there may be several such students in your remedial class this semester. But picture this same young lady reading aloud a paraphrase of an article she read on laser-beam surgery. Her classmates are astounded. They stare at her. She is very pleased. So am I.

The title of this article is borrowed, of course, from Ron Stotts' "Writing Right and Left," which appeared in the October 1982 issue of inside english *(1). Stotts' article is one Joe Collignon used with the students in English 100 to give them a source in the assigned topic. At present, Collignon spends his time writing, publishing, and enjoying his retirement.*

USING QUESTIONS

(Continued from Page 5)

divisions in the paper and, once translated into statements, might become topic sentences. The information that answers the questions can be numbered to guide the writer to arrangement on an outline. Because the writer uses only one side of the paper, the answers can be cut apart and scrambled to test various arrangements. The flexibility of ideas is as essential and achievable in a long paper as in a short one. The ten-page paper has become no more difficult than the two-page essay.

This son is now a high school senior and still an honors English student. In fact, he may even become an English major. In the last six years he has written innumerable research papers in classes ranging from English to history and science. He probably could have muddled his way through these projects; however, in all disciplines this question technique has insured that his research time is well spent and the finished product has strong focus. My students are not honors students; many have come to freshman comp through a semester or two of remedial courses. Their high school writing experiences were generally limited. They need the direction supplied by questions. They need to have a quantitative assessment of where they stand with their research as they move through the project. I emphasize to them that the questions are a guide. They may change, be eliminated, or even be divided into two or three questions. Using questions helps students gather information as part of the research-paper process and encourages them to assess the completion of their information gathering which, in turn, helps them to save time to write and to edit.

WORK CITED

Kesselman-Turkel, Judi and Franklynn Peterson. *Research Shortcuts*. Chicago: Contemporary Books, Inc., 1982.

Diane Jefferson teaches all levels of English from basic writing to literature.

MARCH 1990 CCCC IN CHICAGO

Reminiscences (With Special Thanks to John Updike's "Central Park")

by WALT DUDEK
Fullerton College

On the morning of the first day of spring, which feels and looks like most mornings in Southern California, I packed my bag, took a shuttle to the Los Angeles Airport, and boarded a United Air flight to Chicago to attend the 1990 Conference on College Composition and Communication. This conference gave me opportunities for doing the following:

Watching an in-flight movie called *Sea of Love* and not feeling guilty that I found myself enjoying the story.

Being surprised at the extensive use of neon artistically adorning the passenger tunnels of the O'Hare Airport.

Spending an hour in freeway traffic getting to the Loop and the Palmer Hotel.

Hurrying a little to upack so as to get back downstairs to register and pick up my conference materials: name tag, map, the catalogue. (It would by fun finalizing first and second choices for the 200-some sessions.)

Dining at the hotel on sole, partially raw and cold because it had been rolled around some frozen spinach. (Since I hadn't eaten much of the meal, the waitress asked if something was wrong, so I told her. She readily took care of the matter. The meal was free as was a scrumptious raspberry tart.)

Turning in early to plan my activities, locating the classical music station on FM, and getting some needed rest.

Running along Lake Superior at 6:00 in the morning, an icy wind biting me unmercifully on my way back to the hotel.

Taking an extra-long hot shower to thaw.

Attending the opening session to hear Jane E. Peterson, a community college instructor and author, deliver her address: "Valuing Teaching: Assumptions, Questions, and Possibilities."

Locating the Adams Room on the 6th floor to find out about "Truths and Realities of the Future of Two-Year College English Programs."

Jotting down from Lynn Troyka ten ways to maintain the joy of teaching: sensible suggestions like "mark fewer papers" and instead "recapture the ecstasy and agony of writing."

Passing up with regret a session on "Sentence Combining in the Current Writing Agenda" to enjoy a wonderful, German-style buffet lunch in the company of a distinguished Chicago judge.

Picking up ideas on a symposium approach to learning and how to use newspapers to teach English skills.

Browsing among the publishers' displays to collect recently released sample copies of texts, invitations to publishers' parties, and freebies (a calendar, notebooks, pens, candy).

Enjoying one of the most extravagant cocktail parties at the Chicago Athletic Club. (I used to get tipsy at parties like this, but these days I content myself with other pleasures: sparkling water with a twist of lime; tasty hors d'oeuvres of shrimp, Cajun chicken pieces, Swedish meat balls; listening to the pianist playing in the background; conversing with the reps.)

Accepting an invitation to share a gourmet dinner there at the club, upstairs on the 9th floor in a Gothic hall replete with stained glass, coats of arms, Latin mottoes, stone floors, exquisitely laid tables.

Not being able to get into the overcrowded Red Lacquer Room at the hotel to hear the three featured speakers: Gwendolyn Brooks, Studs Terkel, Mike Royko, and so going to bed chagrined.

Getting a good seat to hear Peter Elbow from the Amherst University discuss "The Effects of Portfolios on Teaching."

Thinking to myself in the classroom sample session on Creating Effective Assignments for Basic Writers whether I dare take the risk in using criteria-setting to empower students.

Noting that imitation is still a good system for beginning writers.

Enjoying a debate on the philosophy of composition between W. Ross Winterowd from the University of Southern California and John Warnock from the University of Wyoming at Laramie; between "I want to know in advance where I am going" and "I want to be surprised along the way"; between product and process (more or less). Both were winners; both entertaining.

Changing my plans to attend humor night hosted by Hans P. Guth and Gabriele Rico at the hotel and instead paying a visit to the Comedy Club of Chicago: good company on the bus, pizza, lots of laughs, the Chicago skyline and architecture at night!

Relishing a free two hours on Saturday morning enabling me to visit the Chicago Art Institute and asking myself how to do it all in two hours. (El Greco's *Assumption*—one hour; Seurat's *Walk in the Park*—one hour; the Institute's bookstore—one-half hour).

Sweating through a four-hour Saturday afternoon workshop for two-year college teachers on writing and publishing—yes, friends, you can get published (yes, friends, you can lose weight) if you have the determination and the time.

Listening to the famous Chicago Symphony perform the Sibelius Symphony #2 under the direction of—I had hoped Solti—Eric Leinsdorf or was it Kurt Sanderling?

Watching Michael Douglas and Kathleen fight a *War of the Roses* on my flight back to Los Angeles and finding to my surprise how much I enjoyed this black comedy.

Being the only passenger on the shuttle from the Los Angeles Airport to the Buena Park Hotel Sunday afternoon and feeling glad to be home.

Walter Dudek has been teaching at Fullerton College for the past twenty-six years. In addition to his usual duties of teaching Preparation for College Writing and College Writing classes, he teaches (or has taught) a variety of literature classes, including Introduction to Literature, World Literature, and the Bible as Literature. On some weekends throughout the year, he shares the responsibility with Lynn Fauth of Oxnard College and others of reading CBEST essays up North, and once a year the pleasure of AP readings back East where he has recently been graduated to table leader.

REVIEWS

(Continued from Page 10)

Hefferman and Johnston. *The Harvest Reader*. 2nd. ed. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1991.

Kennedy, et al. *The Bedford Reader*. 4th. ed. Bedford, 1991.

Lester. *A Writer's Handbook: Style and Grammar*. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1991.

Muller. *The McGraw-Hill Reader: Themes in the Disciplines*. 4th. ed. McGraw-Hill, 1991.

Nelson. *At the Point of Need: Teaching Basic and ESL Writers*. Boynton/Cook, 1991.

Rico and Mano. *American Mosaic: Multicultural Readings in Context*. Houghton/Mifflin, 1991. (With Instructor's Resource Manual.)

Schultz. *Writing from Start to Finish: The "Story Workshop" Basic Forms Rhetoric-Reader*. Concise ed. Boynton/Cook, 1990.

A lot has happened since the December issue of *i.e.*: war has broken out on the other side of the world, the drought in our State intensifies, and the recession deepens. But much also remains the same: a new semester has begun as it begins again and again at least twice each year, students enter and drop our classes, and we search for ways to help students through the (certainly for them) complexities and difficulties of writing and literature. For many of us, the events in our larger world make the concerns in the world of our English classes seem less important.

But perhaps that is not totally true. Someone I know proposed that the war with Iraq in part resulted from ignorance. By this she meant that because those who met with Iraq's representatives knew neither their language nor their culture, the diplomats could not couch their demands in terms that might have been acceptable. This of course, is an oversimplification, but it does point up the need to expand our knowledge beyond our own language and our own Western culture.

This issue's front-page article raises some important questions about what we teach our students and, in passing, questions the recent call for broadening the canon of literature and rethinking the assumptions that underlie our various approaches to teaching. The October 1991 issue of *inside english* will examine more closely this trend. Several universities, Stanford among them, have wrestled with making some deep changes in their curriculum. Many colleges have addressed the concerns of cultural diversity: some, like Santa Monica, have initiated a task force to look at curriculum transformation; others have developed centers, like Foothill's Cultural Diversity Center. But in all cases, the discussions about transforming the curriculum so that it reflects the cultural diversity of America and the greater world have been passionate (on both sides) and have raised serious questions about what, how, and why we teach.

In addition, the article hints that our classrooms often are not places of true education, true learning. The May issue of *i.e.* will focus on the English classroom—literature, creative writing, composition, reading, ESL. How do we make these places of education? What informs our choices of what we teach and how we teach it?

Read the front-page article and then think about the questions it raises. Maybe you have a different opinion, a comment to add. We'd like to hear from you.

BARBARA BILSON WOODRUFF

USING GRANTS FOR THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

Bridging the Barriers Between Full- and Part-time Faculty

by **PETER SOTIRIOU**
Los Angeles City College

When I assumed the responsibilities of English Department Chair at Los Angeles City College in 1989, I faced a daunting staffing problem: an enormous disparity in the numbers of full-time and part-time faculty: 19.5 full-time to 65 part-time faculty. Well over half of our courses were (and still are) being taught by adjunct faculty.

Since 1989, a Title III Grant had allowed us (both full- and part-time faculty) to meet in workshops two or three times an academic year to discuss pedagogical issues and, for many of us, to finally be able to place the name with the face. In addition, all of us were paid for attending on Saturday. The response from many of our faculty was very positive. So I wanted to find ways to expand the possibilities for part-tiine and full-time faculty to continue to meet and be paid for these meetings.

Last spring I applied for a California State Fund for Instructional Improvement (FII) Grant, requesting funds to pay local scholars to present workshops to our faculty and to pay our seasoned teachers to mentor many of our new part-time hires. The grant was approved, and this academic year I have scheduled six Saturday workshops and funded two full-time teachers to mentor approximately six of our newest part-time teachers interested in improving their teaching.

The results so far have been very encouraging. We have had two successful workshops (one in October and the second in November), and we still have four more scheduled. At these meetings we grapple with issues that concern our entire department, but that we never have time or money to face head on: how to teach developmental writing effectively, how to re-see the Freshman Composition course, what the current research says about ESL reading and writing, and so on. The scholars I have scheduled from UCLA and USC have been enthusiastic in their desire to participate, and our faculty (the thirty or more who faithfully attend the Saturday meetings) are eager to learn about ways to do their job better.

Our mentoring program has proved to be a particularly significant aspect of the FII grant. The mentors and part-time faculty have agreed to meet on Friday afternoons and to visit some or all of the other teachers' classes. Since these meetings do not affect the part-time performance evaluations, the part-time faculty tend to be more candid about where they are having teaching difficulties. And our mentor teachers, seasoned and successful though they are, reconsider their teaching practices as well.

After the grant ends in June, I plan to use Title III money to continue both the workshops and the mentoring for the 1991-1992 academic year. I am very pleased with the sense of community that we are beginning to build in our department, and I do not want this feeling to dissipate once the state money is spent, as so often happens when special funding dries up. I also plan to see whether permanent monies can be set aside for our department, so that each year we as a faculty of eighty-five will be able to meet, share our ideas, and help each other.

Unfortunately, I think that throughout this decade and into the next century the exploitation of part-time faculty is going to be a painful reality for most English departments statewide. Nevertheless, we need to find ways for these two faculty tracks to begin to work together in order to create a sense of community in our departments and (of course) to enrich the learning experiences of our students.

I am eager to discuss my project with any faculty interested in pursuing a similar program in their department. Address your inquiries to:

Peter Sotiriou, Chair
English Department
Los Angeles City College
855 North Vermont Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90029
Or call me at (213) 669-4232

SUBMISSIONS

(Continued from Page 9)

in the Writing Classroom
Reflecting Cultural/Ethnic/Gender/Age Diversity in Planning a Literature Curriculum
Teaching to the Many While Not Neglecting the Few

Strategies for Revitalizing the Writing Instructor
Strategies for Revitalizing the Literature Instructor

All English instructors are invited to submit manuscripts on these and other topics of concern to our profession.

In addition, *i.e.* invites reviews of writing and literature texts and books of pedagogy and philosophy pertinent to the teaching of English. The journal is also interested in reviews of novels, short story collections, and volumes of poetry (current or past) that have nourished you as an instructor and lover of language and literature.

Please follow the format briefly described on page 2 of each issue of *i.e.* For a more detailed description of the guidelines for submission, please write the editor for an "*inside english* Style Sheet."

COLLEGE COMPOSITION AND COMMUNICATION invites submissions exploring the following topics on which it hopes to publish articles over the next three years:

Literacies Inside and Outside the Academy
Gender, Writing, and Pedagogy
Race, Writing, and Pedagogy
Rediscovering Lost Rhetorics

Implementing the CCCC's "Statement of Principles and Standards for the Postsecondary Teaching of Writing." (The Statement, a response to the Wyoming Resolution, appeared in the October 1989 issue of *CCC*; authors citing the Statement should use this version.)

CCC will continue to publish articles on a wide range of subjects relating to composition and its teaching. Follow the guidelines for anonymous submissions outlined on the back of the title page of each issue of *CCC*.

THE WRITING LAB JOURNAL invites manuscripts. Four copies should be sent to Nancy Grimm and Diana George, Department of Humanities, Michigan Tech University, Houghton, MI 49931 (BITNET: DGEORGE@MTUSYS5). Inquiries about book reviews should be addressed to Ed Lotto, Learning Center, Lehigh University, Bethlehem, PA 18015 (BITNET: EEL2@LEHIGH).

PIKESTAFF FORUM seeks substantive, pithy book reviews—*not* scholarly essays—of recent novels, collections of short stories, and poetry published by small presses and university presses. Reviews should be insightful, informative, and focused on the works themselves. Send manuscript with SASE to Jim Elledge, Book Review Editor, *Pikestaff Forum*, English Department, Illinois State University, Normal, IL 61761-6901.

The **WRITING LAB NEWSLETTER** is a monthly publication to promote interchange of information and ideas for those who work in writing centers and language arts centers or those who work with writing in tutorial settings. Articles discuss methods and goals of tutorial writing, describe specific programs and centers, consider administrative concerns of writing labs, offer research reports, etc. Also included are reviews of materials and books, conference announcements, and a monthly column by and for peer tutors. The newsletter is a publication of the national Writing Centers Association, an NCTE Assembly. Manuscripts are invited and should be no longer than ten to twelve pages. Please enclose a self-addressed envelope with stamps clipped (not pasted). For those who wish to join the newsletter group, a yearly donation of $10.00 ($15.00 for Canadian readers) is requested. (Sorry, we have no invoices, so prepayment is appreciated.) Please send checks made payable to Purdue University to Muriel Harris, editor, *Writing Lab Newsletter*, Department of English, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN 47907.

inside english DEADLINES

Manuscripts received after the deadline for a given issue will be considered for the next appropriate issue.

MAY 1991 issue
The English Classroom of the 90s
15 March 1991

OCTOBER 1991 issue
Diversity in Writing and Literature
15 August 1991

TIP OF MY TONGUE

Why Shakespeare Couldn't Spell

by H. WENDELL SMITH
Santa Monica College, Retired

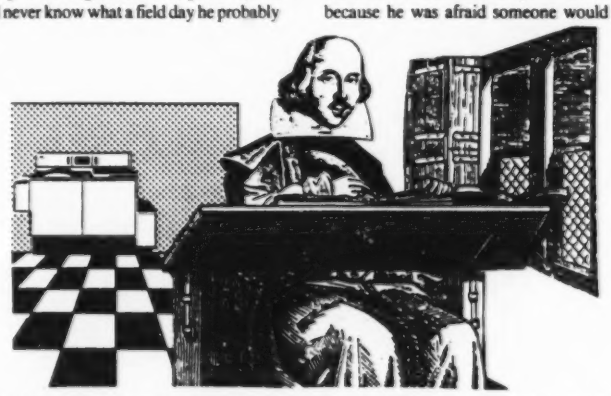
Shakespeare was a bad speller. He had good schooling, but that didn't help, because the schoolmaster couldn't spell either. Neither could the queen or Sir Walter Raleigh. It was a bad time for spelling.

Not that the schoolmaster didn't try to teach spelling. In spite of his own troubles, he did try, but circumstances were against him. His only authority for the "correct" spelling of words was a textbook he had used before dropping out of med school. It showed *surgeon, surgien, serurgien* and *cirurgien*—four different ways of spelling it—all on one page. Probably it was a good thing that the schoolmaster had taken to the chalkboard instead of the knife. Imagine being etherized on *his* table.

Shakespeare sometimes spelled his name *Shackspeere* and sometimes *Shaxpere*, so he often didn't even get his graded paper back. And oral spelling bees didn't work well for that teacher, either. It didn't take Shakespeare and his classmates long to figure out that when you misspelled a word you got to sit down. Good spelling was hard on the arches.

When Shakespeare and his classmates were asked to write, they had no guidelines. Nobody had thought of changing *i* to *y* and adding *es* or anything like that. The kids had to slap down whatever came to mind. It's no wonder they were retarded spellers and had to rely on imagination.

One happy result of the spelling trauma was that Shakespeare took to writing for the theater, where he could just read a play aloud until all the actors had memorized their parts. Then he could burn the script to hide the bad spelling. That probably explains why we haven't any of his original manuscripts now, and we'll never know what a field day he probably had with *multitudinous* and *incarnadine*.



Printers in Elizabethan times couldn't spell either, and often left important letters out. Some people say that when Shakespeare signed his sonnets, he couldn't decide which way to spell his own name, so he signed "W. Sh." The careless publisher wrote an inscription to the author (actually to the "onlie begetter") of the sonnets, but he left out the *S*, and for centuries people have worried over who "Mr. W. H." was.

Bad spelling dogged Shakespeare right to his grave. He wrote his own epitaph, and the words are still visible, carved into the stone floor of the church at Stratford-upon-Avon. Will was buried there, sixteen feet deep because he was afraid someone would dig up his bones unless he made the digging difficult.

"Good frend," he wrote to start the epitaph. You see how he ducked the problem of "*i* before *e*," having never heard the rule.

"Good frend, for Iesvs sake . . . ." The trouble here was that Shakespeare and his fellow students didn't know a *J* from an *I* or a *u* from a *v*. Luckily, they had no spray-paint cans.

His epitaph goes on: "for Iesvs sake forbeare to digg the dvst enclosed heare." When he wrote that, he laughed up his sleeve and spelled *digg* with two *g*'s because he knew full well that the "dvst" under the church was rock hard. He chose the spot for that reason, passing up the opportunity to be buried among the poets in Westminster Abbey, where digging is all too easy.

"Blese be ye man yt spares thes stones and cvrst be he yt moves my bones." He made *that* look like *yt* because his desk had wormholes in it and the pen kept slipping.

What with all that sloppy spelling and the wormholes, it's remarkable that Shakespeare managed to write legibly at all. Too bad he was born so soon instead of living in the age of computers. Had he put his mind to it, he might have been pretty good at word processing. Especially with Spelgard. (He could have made good use of the thesaurus feature, too. *Incarnadine* just means *bloody*.)

In America today we are putting our kids through the same woeful experience that retarded Shakespeare. We're hiring schoolmasters who can't spell. It's a comedy of errors, a tragedy for the future, and probably means that the poems and plays written by coming generations won't be much better than Shakespeare's.

Maybe not even that good.

NB: People who take seriously any part of this treatise will have their bones moved by order of the author.

—W.S.

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Vol. XVIII, No. 4 | Journal of the English Council of California Two-Year Colleges | May 1991

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inside english

ECCTYC

Looks at The English Classroom of the Nineties

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THE *AMATEUR* IN THE CLASSROOM

Democracy and the Humanities

by **LEO BRAUDY**
Bing Professor of English
University of Southern California

The following article is adapted from Professor Leo Braudy's keynote address at the Staff Development Conference sponsored by the English Council of the Los Angeles Community College District, 5 December 1990. Dr. Braudy writes that "this is a somewhat revised version of a talk I gave to AP English teachers and principals in the LA Unified School District." The talk appears in that older format as part of a collection of Dr. Braudy's essays, Native Informant: Essays on Film, Fiction, and Popular Cultures, *published December 1990 by Oxford University Press. The editorial staff of* inside english *thanks Dr. Braudy for allowing us to reprint his remarks.*

This is going to be essentially an optimistic talk, filled with praise of the humanities and what they offer students, along with praise of ourselves for being involved in this venture. But to make praise energizing rather than lulling, we have to know the attacks. As Milton remarked, only uncloistered virtue is truly virtuous because it has been tested and still survived.

Therefore, I'll also touch on the attacks on the humanities: from those who are upset with secular humanism, as they call it (without pausing to define or to praise religious humanism in contrast); from those who attack literary theory and say that it prevents students from knowing the literary classics; and from those, like Jonathan Culler and other theorists, who claim both that a canon of great works is an elitist concept unsuitable either to learning or to democracy, and that there is a necessary disparity between literary criticism and literary education.

By the humanities, I mean those studies—literature, language, philosophy, history, and art history—that have to do specifically with the ways human beings have tried to depict the world through visual and verbal rather than mathematical and quantitative languages, those studies where voice and authorship, individual perspective and audience understanding, are more important than a quest for an invariable and interpersonally accurate truth.

When most of us took our first courses in literature and the humanities in high school and college, the prevailing method was a combination of New Criticism and History of Ideas: read the language of the works carefully and analyze the themes and ideas. The recent expansion of interest in literary theory—the study of literature as a special case of language—goes hand in hand with an unprecedented self-consciousness about what it is we do as teachers and how it is we do it. Because language can never be merely a transparent vehicle for what it says, reading is no longer a question merely of dictionary definitions and their nuances. Questions of literary theory—the difference between spoken language and written language—therefore influence questions of composition training: Should we encourage students to approximate the ideal essay that exists in our heads, or should we somehow support the particular mode of expression that they are developing for themselves? And if somehow the answer is *both* the social ideal and the individual aspiration, how is that integration accomplished?

The interest in these unsettling issues comes, intriguingly enough, at the same time as an increasing number of attacks from all quarters upon teaching and upon the humanities themselves—or at least upon different conceptions of the humanities. The links between elementary and high school, high school and college, have been questioned, as have the links between school itself and the outside world, along with the efforts of schools to connect students with the larger society and therefore, say these critics, to separate them from family and tradition. In response, some critics have advocated a consumer-centered learning in which students take only those courses that are deemed directly relevant to getting a job, while others have insisted on a return to a basic canon of Great Works.

Without being a Pollyanna, however, I do think that it is just as easy to read what is happening now as an occasion for ferment and change rather than either a forecast of oncoming gloom or a description of already rampant corruption. For there is a great freshness, a ferment of ideas about education and learning, that has the potential to democratize the closed guilds by which older disciplines established themselves. A new spirit of interdisciplinary study, for example, has come into the university. Administrators at many schools now boast about hiring people with a joint appointment in English and law school, or philosophy and the medical school. At USC, a Center for Study in the Neurological Sciences has brought together talent from biology, psychology, linguistics, and other fields—for what is a greater disrespector of artificial categories than the brain itself? Many disciplines are in this way developing what they call lower fences. Fields of learning are questioning the rigid boundaries between them, seeking instead those areas in which they overlap with other fields, rather than those where they are pure and distinct. A spirit of what I like to call *amateurism* is more apparent—not "amateur" in the English sense of a dabbler, but *amateur* in the French sense of an emotional affinity for a subject or subjects, where

(HUMANITIES, Continued on Page 4)

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Letters

KUDOS FROM AFAR

My husband, John Baiys, and I learned about your journal when we attended a conference on composition and literature sponsored by City Colleges of Chicago several years ago. There we met Marjorie Ford [Santa Rosa College], who was speaking about the Work of Literary Merit program in California colleges, and we picked up a copy of *inside english*. we've been subscribers ever since. We find the journal particularly interesting since the concerns and issues of California colleges are so similar to our concerns in Florida, where we both teach at large, multi-campus community colleges. California seems to be recognizing and addressing issues we find ourselves coping with, too.

CAROL WERSHOVEN
Palm Beach Junior College, South

MEA CULPA

In case anyone picks on *my* egregious error in "Reminiscences" [*inside english*, March 1991:12] about running along Lake Superior instead of Lake Michigan, just say that in spite of his age, the author is a very, very fast runner.

WALTER J. DUDEK
Fullerton College

NOSTRA CULPAE

Re the fourth annual Poetry Forum (under Notices ["Conferences," *inside english*, March 1991:2]) the term should be *exaltation*: "An *Exaltation* of Larks."

CONTE GUZMAN
Diablo Valley College

Editor's Note: To our tired old eyes, exultation *looked just as good as* exaltation. *Sorry for the goof.*

Thanks for the . . . March issue. Except for one printer's error . . . it's an excellent editorial job. (The printer substituted "students moving from mediocrity to *incompetence*" for the original "students moving from mediocrity to *competence*" ["Paraphrasing Right and Left," *inside english*, March 1991: 11].) No one has mentioned it so far so it may have gone unnoticed. Anyway, at a St. Patrick's Day party . . . I talked to three people who have either introduced a paraphrasing unit in their classes or planned to do so—as a result of reading that article. I hope the response from your general readership proved as rewarding.

. . . [E]veryone who has read my article (non-English teachers mainly) has commented favorably on my article but get downright excited about your publication; they enjoy the whole publication. . . . You really have a good publication, and I'm happy to have been included.

JOE COLLIGNON
Fullerton College, retired

Editor's Note: I hope that neither the typesetter's substitution nor our not catching the error reflects our subconscious evaluation of students' performance in the classroom.

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Since the December 1980 issue of *inside english*—in other words, for forty-three issues—Gordon Taylor has served as our man in Sacramento, keeping us apprised of the vagaries of legislative bills that concerned community colleges; the complexities of state budgets; the foibles of our leaders in the Legislature, the Chancellor's Office, the unions—and their followers. Gordon presented this information in his inimitable style, full of intelligent analysis, wry humor, ironic asides, and sometimes outrageous conclusions. His curmudgeon pose, however, may have hidden from *i.e.*'s readers the real Gordon Taylor who cares deeply about language and literature, about honor and honesty, about culture and communication, about what and why we teach, about the students who sit in our classrooms.

All of us owe Gordon a deep debt for his unflagging diligence in articulating the political issues affecting community colleges and allowing us a look at what underlay those issues. We will miss his unique voice, his singular stance. With grateful appreciation for his almost eleven years of perceptive commentary, we say a regretful "Goodbye" and an affectionate "Thank You."

This issue focuses on the classroom—traditional, computer, developmental. The issue's lead article explores what we teach in our classrooms, grounding our teaching of literature (the humanities) in the democratic principles that inform our society at its best and seeing both us and our students as *amateurs* in a very particular sense of that word. One article suggests methods of reaching and changing the lives of "sweathogs"—those "at-risk" students who are perhaps our greatest challenge. Another describes an instructor's realization that what we choose to teach often reflects our lives and touches our hearts and minds but not our students'. Two instructors share their delight in teaching with computers, and another enthusiastically endorses the game of Wild Word Soccer as a way of involving students in a text. Both in-class writing and holistic scoring receive the praises of one instructor who sees them as benefitting both students and instructors. Another article questions the integrity of two classroom models: one in which the teacher is a follow writer; the other in which the instructor is the students' friend. Each article presents a different way or questions a method of engaging the students who sit before us, in a circle with us, or across the desk from us within the walls of our classrooms. All the authors demonstrate their commitment to teaching, to students, to the profession.

The next issue of *i.e.* looks at diversity: how it affects what we teach and how we teach and reflects our student and faculty population. We look forward to receiving your views about this significant trend in education and your strategies for teaching in the colleges of the 1990s.

BARBARA BILSON WOODRUFF
Santa Monica College

A DOUBLE CON GAME IN THE CLASSROOM?

A Kinder, Gentler English Teacher

by CAROL WERSHOVEN
Palm Beach Community College

Nearly thirty years ago, Wayne Booth described three extreme positions, or rhetorical stances, instructors may assume in the classroom. The pedant's stance stresses the subject of writing and ignores the personal relationship of speaker and audience; the entertainer's stance sacrifices both students and subject matter to feed the instructor's ego; and the advertiser's stance focuses on the student at the expense of both subject and the teacher's voice (139-45). Booth's classifications remain relevant today as the instructor of freshman English, desperate to make a difference in student's lives, attemps to exhort, amuse, or entice students towards enlightenment. But in the years since Booth's classifications, the explosion in composition theory has led to a widening of rhetorical roles. Today, the instructor is tempted to assume two new stances, which when pushed to extremes are as dangerous as those of pedant, entertainer, and advertiser. These rhetorical stances, fed and fostered by recent theory, are extreme ways of "acting out" the implications of that theory and are particularly dangerous because they seem so benign. The Fellow Artist and the Therapist seduce us with their gentleness.

Instructor-as-Fellow-Artist

The Instructor-as-Fellow-Artist is no longer the instructor of freshman composition at all; he or she is the head writer in a creative writing seminar. The emphasis on student writing as text-to-be-interpreted, not as product-to-be-evaluated, has transformed the freshman writing classroom into a writing workshop, where a fellow writer (once called the instructor) guides the other writers through the process of writing, not, as Robert Probst warns, "simply presenting to them, ex cathedra, the pronouncements of an unchallengeable authority. To do so would exclude them from the community into which the teacher is charged with bringing them" (78). As Probst further explains, "We want students to see teachers not as right authority figures to be deferred to, nor as wrong authority figures to be rejected, but as individuals, representing a culture and a discipline, with whom to talk" (77).

Richard Fulkerson cautions against imposing form on these initiates to our community, for "to teach form directly" returns us "to the empty formalism for which current-traditional, or product, pedagogies have been widely criticized" (153). Butturff and Sommers suggest that each instructor become a Maxwell Perkins to the student's F. Scott Fitzgerald (104). Often, instructors are invited to share the editor's role with their students by bringing their own works-in-progress to the classroom for student evaluation.

No one wants to be the Pope of the classroom, and everyone wants to welcome students to this new discipline, culture, and community. The hazards of the pedant's stance have long been manifest, and the horrors of "grading" an essay solely for its spelling and punctuation errors long exposed. So the stance of instructor-as-mentor-and-guide seems attractive and sensible. But like any role that is overplayed, it can be dangerous. The model for the "new" classroom, where process, not product, reigns, is the creative writing seminar. It focuses on student writing as text and assumes a potential F. Scott Fitzgerald or Alice Walker in each student writer.

Because imposing form on the budding writer is so hazardous, there is a move towards formlessness, towards a definition of writing that is "creative" because it is spontaneous and unstructured. In addition, the focus solely on process can result in the work-in-perpetual-progress, the eternally incomplete. And because student texts are to be interpreted, not evaluated, there is a reluctance to stifle the creative process by singling out such basic errors as grammar and punctuation problems.

This nightmare version of the creative writing seminar appears at a time when basic writing skills are a national concern. Even Fulkerson notes that a 1980 national survey of leaders in composition listed "the inability to organize papers effectively" as the second most important weakness in student writing (152). In 1989, a Carnegie Foundation study of 5,450 college faculty revealed that 75 percent of those polled consider students seriously underprepared in basic skills ("Academic Life: The Faculty View" 1). At worst, the writing class as creative workshop becomes a mechanism for evading the problems we all deplore. The instructor becomes a contemporary version of Bartleby's employer: faced with an inescapable and seemingly insoluble dilemma, he tries to pretend that it is not there. As Joseph Harris notes, "community" can become "an empty and sentimental word" (13).

> The metaphor of the "community of discourse" offers us a way of talking about why many of our students fail to think and write as we would like them to without having to suggest that they are somehow slow or inept because they do not. Instead, one can argue that the problem is less one of intelligence than socialization, that such students are simply unused to the peculiar demands of academic discourse. (16)

And thus the con game begins. Creative writing generally presupposes familiarity with the basic tools of writing; that is, most institutions impose a prerequisite or, at least, "permission of the instructor" for entry into such courses. But the transformation of the composition classroom into the seminar is founded on fantasy, the fantasy that "We are all artists here."

It is a particularly seductive fantasy for instructors. Creative writing is notoriously difficult to assess, for such assessment is subjective by nature. Thus, instructors can excuse themselves from those harsh, unpleasant judgments of grammar and structure. And by assuming either that students know the basics or that the basics are irrelevant, instructors need not trouble themselves with them. Discussion—class discussion, peer discussion, small group discussion, collaborative learning—seems so natural, so comfortable. It is so much easier to talk about writing than to teach it or do it. It is so comfortable to sit within a circle rather than to go to the blackboard, to struggle to make the basics interesting and even relevant. Model structures, exercises, handouts are difficult to prepare, hard to integrate.

There are other attractions as well. Works-in-progress eliminate the unpleasantness of confrontations over deadlines or grades. There are no bad evaluations, only incomplete texts. Most everyone will like the Instructor-as-Fellow Artist.

And then there is the double con. Students may not be experts in writing skills, but they can read and interpret the text of classroom discourse faster than we think. Pragmatists, they soon conclude that their works-in-progress need never be finished, that the emphasis on revision can mean that the first things they do don't really "count." Freed of the imposition of form, they feel no need to plan. And, worst of all, they interpret the aura of creativity as the sign of the easy grade. Within the circle of discussion, each member of the discourse community, teacher or student, is making an unspoken deal: "I won't demand much of you, if you won't demand much of me."

Instructor-as-Therapist

The Fellow Artist negotiates a secret deal with students; so does the Therapist. As in the case of the Artist, the Therapist role emerges from good intentions. Recognizing the anxieties of the student writer, the instructor tries to alleviate them, to address what Chris Anson describes as students' "misguided expectations as their private creations struggle with the public nature of discourse," their "conflicts of ego" and vulnerabilities as their instinct to present their best selves battles with their need to reveal their imperfections (2). Anson proposes that we deal with such conflicts by taking the time to "interact, in a truly intersubjective and meaningful way, with our students" (7).

For Dene and Gordon Thomas, one model for such interaction is the small group conference, where "the teacher sets the topic and defines the conference in terms of the writer's

(DOUBLE CON, Continued on Page 9)

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HUMANITIES AND DEMOCRACY

(Continued from Page 1)

the connection is made through a sense of shared questions rather than a rigorous logic of professional development—*amateur*, that is, not opposed to the professional sense of depth of knowledge in a field, but *amateur* in the fascination about how that field is inseparable from others.

This is, of course, nothing new to us. Every day we must move back and forth between professional and amateur, training in a subject and connecting that subject to the variety of the student's world.

By the time students come to college and certainly by the time they arrive at graduate school, they have become too goal-directed, either economically, intellectually, or both, to be totally receptive to the virtues of a general humanistic education. The National Center for Educational Statistics says that between 1963 and 1983 the number of students majoring in foreign languages and literature fell 58 percent, philosophy 60 percent, and English 72 percent. And the natural sciences lost as well. As Andrew Hacker points out, though, the intriguing aspect of these statistics is that the loss was greatest not between 1963 and 1973, the era of great university expansion, but between 1973 and 1983, the era of the shrinking economy.

Although it may offend the purity that some would like to ascribe to the humanities, the evidence is now beginning to mount that a humanistic education *is* practical as well. Something between one-third and one-half of the six or seven hundred corporations that recruit every year at USC now ask for humanities majors rather than business or some more obvious job-oriented major. Their explanation is that they can always teach a new employee the specifics of their business but they can't teach the skills of conceptualization, the verbal problem solving, the style of attention, and the ability to discuss and dissect ideas that are the essence of courses in the humanities. Similarly, business schools are becoming aware that graduates who snag those high-paying business jobs lack the training to get any further.

As these experiences show, and as our intuition surely tells us, humanistic study is a core for other study and an essential in any interdisciplinary program. By "interdisciplinary" I include everything, for, except for those few researchers who push deeper into specific subject areas, we are all involved in interdisciplinary work and we all live interdisciplinary lives. "Interdisciplinary" is, of course, a humanistic concept opposed to the parochial professionalism of individual disciplines, an indispensable aid to whatever else the student is doing, and a connection between the individual and the community—not necessarily through specific shared values but through the ability to be a critical and aware citizen.

Since the concept of citizenship in a democracy automatically brings up the question of what a citizen is and who may be a citizen, let me turn now to the criticism of the humanities and of humanities courses, as well as the criticism of the humanistic "values" (on which conservative defenders of the humanities set so great a store) as in fact being based on a canon of Great Books that is anti-democratic, elitist, and exclusionary.

To a great extent I agree with this view: A small canonical group of texts has too often been the only subject matter of humanities courses—alternative voices have *not* been included as much as they ought to. But I disagree that therefore those texts should be totally replaced by another new canon, which will be similarly invariable. We are a society with a history in which individuals have had to grapple with the never-settled meaning of what it means to be an American. We therefore have obligations *both* to traditional subject matter *and* to expanding the idea of what subject matter can be, in other words, to both the old and the new canons. The experience of reading is always to become Another, to enter into that other's consciouness, to shape one's own in sympathy and in contrast. In the exploration of alternate views of the world, a student, whoever he or she is, can learn as much from a book by a southern black woman as from one by a New England white man—but only if that student has been taught *to read* with understanding and empathy.

The word "privileged" is often used in literary criticism these days, and it usually means "falsely or illegitimately considered centrally important." It's a useful word because it forces us to be aware of the number of books and ideas we teach primarily because they were the ones we were taught, or because we can easily find them in anthologies, or because they suit the shape of the semester or of the curriculum.

But privileged works, works to which we return because of their continuing freshness and relevance, should not be considered separate from other works that strike a particular chord at a particular time. We are not setting up a hit parade. We are teaching how to read and how to understand. Part of that teaching is to interrogate standard works and an equally important part is to undercut any sense of ideal order and unchanging values they may embody or imply. If we emphasize learning as a continuing quest for understanding, we will better be able to see the so-called canon not as chiseled in stone, but as ways individuals attempted to use language to create meaning. We have to temper our training in delineating the aesthetic forms and teasing out the ideas expressed by language by considering language more generally *and* explicitly as a social act. The politics of language is around us every day, as the success of recent anti-bilingualism initiatives makes clear. But that politics is enbedded in all works of language, even the seemingly most rarefied and aesthetic.

In one aspect, the humanities study historically *validated* works, the ones that have survived. In another, they study humanistically *relevant* works, which may have been created yesterday. In the first aspect they affirm the continuity of human concerns through time. In the second, they affirm the variety and complexity of the human community, with its frequently time-bound and discontinuous preoccupations. And, of course, both of these aspects, the timely and the timeless, usually can be found in any single work.

To affirm the social nature of language is to affirm language as a form of action, a shape of human will, not passive before Great Works but engaged with them. Thus, an authentic humanistic education does not teach theorists or works as canonical, nor does it teach ideas as exclusive or totalizing truths. It teaches, instead, how to respond as fully as possible to the experience of the separateness of the world as expressed in language, creating a stepping back that is sympathetic without being detached or aloof.

For now I must confess my belief that the study of literature is the core of all humanistic education. Whether that study is of imaginative or philosophical or historical literature, it involves a sense of knowing *how language works* to convey meaning from one person, called an author, to another, called a reader. In other words, a good teacher, like a good story, must be defined not only in himself or herself, but also in relation to an audience.

All the way through the education system, a teacher of literature in this expanded sense is not just a teacher of history or American studies or movies or political science, but a teacher of all discursive practices—all the ways languages link us to other people and to the world.

This view of humanistic education as an education in the learning of the many languages human beings have used and are using to make sense of the world is clearly not immediately applicable to becoming a doctor, businessman, or computer programmer. But if we don't see its importance, we will be in the danger described by Robert Pattison in his book *On Literacy*, of creating a two-tier society in which a cultural underclass is trained in functional literacy to work in a system where the executives and people in power come from schools in which language arts are the center of curriculum.

That possibility may offend our sense of education because our nineteenth-century legacy dictates that specialization and expertise in the practical are the way to success, not education in the old-fashioned arts of reading and interpretation. But as Alexis de Tocqueville remarked, the ambitious in America chose immediate, practical goals because they were "much more in love with success than with glory," and by "glory" he meant an ambition that was not for oneself alone but for the community as well.

The great paradox of the humanities is that this area of study—which is most professedly about the values that unite us—is the subject that is most usually pursued by solitary individuals. As seekers and expositors of humanistic learning, therefore, we have a special relation to American individualism with all its virtues and faults. Our professional responsibility, however, is to be aware of the culture and be connected to it. The exploration of

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***inside english* DEADLINES**

Manuscripts received after the deadline for a given issue will be considered for the next appropriate issue.

OCTOBER 1991 issue
The Challenge of Diversity in the English Classroom
15 August 1991

DECEMBER 1991 issue
Teaching Literature at All Levels
15 January 1992

MARCH 1992 issue
Teaching Writing at All Levels
15 October 1991

COMPUTERS IN THE CLASSROOM

The Wave of the Future

by JAMES R. MUSGRAVE
San Diego Mesa College/Grossmont College

As we move into the last decade of the century, it's time we took a long look at the most recent development in computerized classrooms for English teachers. As a present instructor inside one of these noble "cold storage rooms for the academically insane," I will give you the best and the worst of this experience. However, I will say, quite candidly, that I am biased in favor of these classrooms for several reasons: the recession atmosphere in our present economy; the need for accuracy and computer literacy in our workforce; the impatience of employers who are tired of college "eggheads" who can't keep things simple. So with that bit of spleen-venting, on with the show!

Using the IBM-PC Chalkboard Software on the Intell Network (with glee!)

If you have yet to learn the rudiments of a computer, you are probably one of the following rare birds: a rabid Marxist ideologue bent upon class struggle rather than class communication; a crusty teaching vet of the '50s and '60s, who still sees "Big Brother" glaring back from every TV and computer video monitor; or perhaps one of those who just don't feel they have the technical know-how (typing skills, a bit of computer acumen) to make the grade inside one of these clanging, whirring, and freezing computerized "jungles."

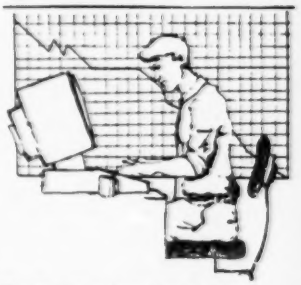
I'll admit, I too was extremely disconcerted by the rows of computer terminals in *my* classroom (the same beloved room where my darlings share enough intellectual *zeitgeist* to force *any* teacher into adoring and rapturous wails of love!). But I had done my homework on WordPerfect software, and I had sought guidance from our super-technologist, Angel (who is a champion karate expert, so I was careful how I phrased my stupid questions), so that when I came into the room that beautiful summer morning, I was "loaded for bear," to use a rather Hemingwayesque cliche.

But what happened that summer in K-402 caused somewhat of a "spiritual awakening" in the depths of this rebellious heart (the same heart that marched with Ron Kovic against Honeywell, Inc. in 1971). What had before taken me eighteen weeks of tortuous paper-rattling at two in the morning with my dog "King Caffeine" was now (with the help of the IBM-PC Chalkboard) taking me on a joyous "Mister Toad's Wild Computer Ride," as my students eventually learned the same composition and grammar rules they learned in those endless eighteen-week sessions in the brief few weeks of a summer (and they *learned* with much more accuracy and creativity).

You may well ask what caused this miraculous metamorphosis—The IBM-PC Chalkboard software system gave me the flexibility and the technical abilities to transform that paper-puking, blood/ink-stained, tortuously agonizing typist's nightmare called the "Freshman English Class" into a course that is, today, paperless (except for the major projects, like our class magazines), bloodless (no more typing nightmares of giant white-out bottles hiding under the bed), and tortureless (no more misspelled words and boring, repetitive exercises in "xeroxing for the lumber industry of America—and probably Brazil)," in the peer critique sessions.

In a nutshell the IBM-PC Chalkboard software program allows the teacher to do the basic teacher functions and do them effectively by using the following:

1. WordPerfect 5.0 or 5.1 Wordprocessing Function.
   a. Used as an "active modeling technique" (you can show your own stuff!).
   b. Used as software for your work-in-progress (that doctoral thesis or that great American Novel you've been hacking away at for years).
2. Student Peek Function.
   a. Used to monitor students' progress (truly, "Big Brother" at work!).
   b. Used to dialogue with student and to correct grammar/sentence errors (as they watch in spell-binding rapture!).
   c. Used to let a student review the work of his/her peers.
3. Broadcast Function.
   a. Used to "broadcast" special notices, assignments, or other work-related info to *all* students.
   b. Used to broadcast a student essay or other exercise onto the overhead projection screen.
   c. The pointer function used to assist with editing students' work.



4. The Common Area (G: Drive):
   a. Used to store model student essays or other exercises.
   b. Used to retrieve student essays for grading (no more paper shuffling!).
   c. Used to retrieve student essays for publication (a student "Editor-in-Chief" is good for this).
   d. Used to enter assignments or other special publications that may be copied by students for future reference or study.
   e. Used to collect final exams for security effectiveness and protection against plagiarism.

As you can see, the possibilities are endless. I am not exaggerating when I say that my

(COMPUTERS, Continued on Page 14)

COLLABORATION AND COMPUTERS

Choreographing the Computer Classroom

by MARJORIE FORD
Stanford University

The following article is adapted from a paper delivered at two conferences: Writing the Future (Austin, Texas, 23 March 1990) and Computers and Writing (New York City, 2 June 1990). Ms. Ford writes: I chose the image of choreography for my title as it seems to fit not only when one is creating collaborative class notes but also when one is coordinating different groups of students to help them work together. It expresses what one is working to accomplish when one helps others to learn and to create together within a structured environment.

When I was first asked to teach my freshman composition sections in the new computer classroom, I did not anticipate the extent to which I would adapt my teaching style to include the computers and how my pedagogy would be changed by the collaborative use of computers for class activities. While I had planned to have students use the computers for a variety of informal writing projects, such as freewriting and peer editing, I had no idea of the many exciting and innovative classroom activities that would develop as I worked with students in the computer classroom setting. My experiences demonstrate the accuracy of Dawn and Raymond Rodrigues' observation in their November 1989 article in *Computers and Composition*, "How Word Processing Is Changing Our Teaching:" "When teachers teach writing with computers, their teaching changes . . . in ways that teachers themselves can't always predict, and in ways that early researchers (focusing on the effects of word processing on the quality of written products) were unable to imagine" (14).

Our computer classroom has eighteen MacIntosh computers around the periphery of the room where students can work. In the front of the classroom, the teacher's computer is connected to an overhead projector that displays what is recorded on the teacher's computer. An inner U of tables creates a rectangle as it meets with the table on which the teacher's computer rests. This inner space is used for seminar-type class discussions.

My course outline was designed to address the presence of these computers in our classroom and how they might affect our approach to writing. Kay Butler Nalin, the Freshman English computer consultant, came to our second class meeting to discuss some of the conclusions of studies on how drafting and revising on computers influence student writing. After her discussion, Nalin recorded on her teacher's computer, which projected on the overhead screen, several sentences illustrating one student's writing process. Continuing her exercise, Nalin asked another student how she might further revise the statement already on the screen. Watching Nalin listening to what the students wanted her to write while recording their ideas on the computer gave me an idea, an idea that I have developed with my students and have been applying in our computer classroom for three quarters now, an idea that I call "collaborative class notes."

While watching Nalin record students' thoughts, I saw possibilities for using the computers to facilitate writing activities that involved collaboration between the students themselves as well as their instructor. I began

by imagining a student in Nalin's position listening to other students' responses to discussion questions and issues brought up by the questions. With the student transcribing responses to discussion questions and with those responses displayed on the overhead screen for everyone to read, I could then concentrate on conducting the class discussion. I realized that I had been frustrated for a long time in my traditional classrooms; untranscribed class discussions sometimes feel incomplete, with no concrete evidence of what we have accomplished. In the traditional classroom when the teacher does feel compelled to stop to record particularly interesting insights on the blackboard, the thread of the dialogue can be broken. With a student transcribing the class discussions on the computer, ideas can be recorded for students to see and think about as they are discussing, to reflect upon after class is over, and to apply in the papers they later write for class assignments.

Intrigued by these possibilities, I promised myself to try a new plan. I gave each student a chance to record a class discussion as he/she heard it while working on the teacher's computer that projected onto the overhead screen. Some of our class discussions, transcribed and captured on the screen, read like poems; recorded spontaneously, a group's reaction to a selected reading reflects its feelings and thoughts, reflects its progress as group members learn to listen to one another and to work together.

Collaborative Class Notes

The process of creating collaborative class notes begins when the students enter the classroom, and I ask them to sit in front of their computers and type a question that they have about the assigned reading; then I have them freewrite on their questions for about ten minutes. As they are writing, I walk around the classroom and ask several students to write their questions on the teacher's computer. After ten minutes, the students print two copies of their freewrites—one for me and one for themselves.

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HUMANITIES AND DEMOCRACY

(Continued from Page 4)

the coherence of cultures is a humanistic topic, as is the training in being both inside and outside one's own. Without such training, the citizen is only a passive participant, pursuing private goals and only sporadically aware of his fellow citizens and his obligations to them.

The challenge in teaching this material and this approach is the difficult one of simultaneously establishing and undermining the absoluteness of authority. This is a particular problem of democratic education, and we all know how often students only want to know the right answers and how upset they get when

one tries to focus on the right questions instead. The idea of a canon or a right answer should be a constant interplay between the accepted classics and the need for their constant revision, the interpenetration of new and old. The society itself should be viewed not as an invariable hierarchy but as a community in flux, an amalgamation of individuals with differing traditions, whose values can yet be understood and absorbed into the whole while strengthening it with their fruitful difference.

Thus, the self-consciousness about the humanities that we as a nation are going through right now is tremendously important to our survival as a culture. Our task, in part, is first to distinguish acculturation from indoctrination and then to turn the pragmatic effort to be acculturated, which everyone goes through upon entering the education system, into the more expansive effort to be cultured and responsive to the differences that give America its vitality.

The old Europe-centered view of the world that was the basic standard for humanistic education and values for the last several hundred years is clearly being transformed. Into what, I'm not sure. I certainly think that many of those values will be reaffirmed, although their connection to a narrow and historically-determined definition of nationalism is definitely outmoded. A different world is emerging—bound together economically and culturally, if not yet politically. It is a world in which nationalism of the old sort doesn't quite work anymore, although no one is very clear about what new nationalism or internationalism is ready to replace it.

The only thing that is clear is that it is an important part of our role as teachers to prepare our students to be citizens of that world. The key is not to learn particular things so much as to learn about the nature of learning itself. The distinction between "skills" and "content" made a few years ago by then-Secretary of Education William Bennett is therefore a false one. By "skills" he means techniques and by "content" he means values. But he doesn't see the values that are embedded in a sensitivity to the way language itself creates meaning, the ways in which form and content are intertwined.

It is hard to say what constitutes "advance" in a discipline like English or philosophy—if "discipline" is the right word. Perhaps the question is not so much "advance" as "renovation" in exploring whatever methods and values are prior to the expertise of more professional disciplines and to where they should periodically return.

In order to do this, we must recall and reaffirm ourselves as students. In an important sense, we all learned much more when we were students than we do as teachers because as teachers we concentrate on our fields and our institutional places, while as students we were free to take courses in many subjects—and those courses overlapped, of course, cross-fertilized, and meshed with one another—WITHIN US. The nature of the student I would like to stress here is not the student as potential professional but the student as *amateur*, the bee gathering from many flowers to create one nectar—in other words, the student as binder. We should be not so much creating the interdisciplinary curriculum as devising means of enhancing the interdisciplinary self.

A necessary part of education in a democracy is that each student, with rare exceptions, will assume a necessary distinction between personal knowledge, the knowledge with which one grew up, the ways of knowing the world taught before and beyond school, and school knowledge, those special ways of knowing and seeing the world—usually connected with learing particular languages—that must be taught by professionals in different fields of learning. What I would argue against here is the usual assumption that one has to put aside the one to learn the other. This assumption has been fostered by the basic democratic idea that education is a passport to social and economic movement, and it seems to be part of an assumption, once again, that connects specialization, profession, and occupation, with "growing up."

But I wonder if someone who is only a good teacher, without being a good student, can still be a model of learning? I'm not talking about the need to do professional research so much as the ability to convey a curiosity not just about one's own discipline but also about its connection to other disciplines and to the world in general—the world that is as an object constantly being offered to us for our understanding and interpretation.

I still have never quite gotten over—and I'm sure this is the experience of most teachers—the shock of discovering that students aren't as interested in the subject as I was when I was a student. Of course, I think that way because I became a teacher, and inside almost every teacher is a former good student constantly raising his or her hand. But that otherwise depressing thought preserves a crucial desire to reawaken or keep awake in ourselves the freshness with which we first learned, the experience of being a student and what it means, especially the pain of confronting ideas that upend our most cherished assumptions. Perhaps an essential element in being professional is exactly the cultivation of this *amateur*, student habit of mind, once we realize the gap between the way we were trained and what we have to do and know once we are on the job. If our own students do not see us as continuing students and the educational process as an unendingly refreshing part of life, then we can't blame them for wanting to make their own education as narrowly relevant to employment and status as so many of them do.

We have heard a lot in recent years about widespread self-consciousness and narcissism and the supposed ill effects on our moral culture they have brought. But I would like to stress instead the opportunities that self-consciousness might bring. We will never again be able to be the country we were two hundred or even twenty years ago. And one essential element of the change is the increased awareness of "the world" with which our students come to us—an awareness usually accompanied by an almost invincible innocence about the relation of their awareness to that of others.

If we consider anyone's nature or actions, there is virtually nothing that we can't "explain"—and I'm putting "explain" in quotation marks—about him or her, nature or nurture, family or environment or ethnic background or DNA. But what IS unique about each person is the way s/he puts all those influences together—the way s/he tells the story that is his or hers.

In a sense we have three selves: a self that is conditioned in its beliefs by our pasts, however that past is defined; a self that acts, sometimes directly in the light of these conditionings . . . sometimes not; and a self that observes itself in action, judges itself, and then changes. It is this third self—the self-conscious self, the self-aware self—that it is our role as teachers of the humanities to foster. Or perhaps a better way of saying this is that our role today, in this media-swollen world, is to transform self-consciousness into self-awareness.

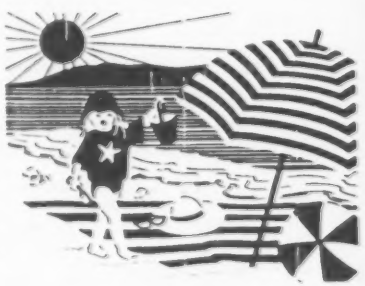
A basic goal of humanistic education should be to develop that critical sense of distance from the socially conditioned self. No one can purge it; so learn how to use it, instead, of being used by it. The self-awareness thus developed is primarily the awareness of oneself as a member of not so much a society as a culture, that is, not a social system but a system of interpersonal understandings, beliefs, and values that—in the nature of American democracy—is constantly shifting, simultaneously self-celebrating and self-criticizing.

In democracies as much as in dictatorships, the classroom is frankly a place for cultural processing. The difference should be that a democracy educates for change by teaching the different languages we use and the different uses we put each language to—while a dictatorship educates for complacency by teaching the one language that is said to suffice for any situation. Too often we don't rise to this challenge. It's always easier to use last year's lesson plans and last decade's notes.

But we may also be prevented from perceiving the challenge at all because we don't often enough consider the classroom to be a processing place for cultural understanding and consider it instead to be a place of purer values and a hermetic laboratory understanding, where students along with ourselves should find a respite from the complications of actual life.

I agree with this latter view in the sense that I do think the classroom is a place where we teach how to pay attention and what to pay attention to. And paying attention requires a certain amount of screening out what for the moment is extraneous. But we also need

(HUMANITIES, Continued on Page 20)



KINGS BEACH

The boy tosses the last crumbs
from his pail
"Shoo!" He waves.
The geese, chests so
staunch, fan
their arrogant wings.
Squatting patiently,
the gulls twitch
in their feathers, watch.
Surrounded, he turns
in circles, runs
to the shore, offering
his small chest
to the water.

JANET GOLDBERG
College of Alameda
Golden Gate University

Janet Goldberg teaches composition and creative writing at the College of Alameda, Vista College, and Golden Gate University. The above poem is from her first manuscript of poetry.

DREAM HOUSES

Reality and Expectations in the 250 Classroom

by JANET GOLDBERG
College of Alameda and Vista College

Had anyone ever listened to these women, I wondered as several of my students shouted their opinions about "Black English" simultaneously. "How's my son gonna compete if he can't speak English!" one irate woman yelled into the face of another, ignoring the fact that they agreed. Moreover, everyone seemed to recognize that it was fine to speak dialect at home, but there was no place for it in public where the white majority ruled. Yet, I wondered, why were my students shouting? Weren't they listening to each other?

Exhilarated by their enthusiasm yet frustrated with my inability to control the discussion, I retreated to my desk. "One at a time. I can't hear you!" I shouted, but to no avail. My class looked less like English 250 and more like *The Morton Downey Show*.

Perhaps I should have expected this. My students had enrolled in the Women in Skilled Trades Program (WIST) at Laney College for one semester to learn a trade, which they hoped would help them obtain well paying jobs. Because some of my students hadn't graduated from high school and were single parents whose sole means of support was a monthly welfare check, their first priority was to get a stable job.

Why then, they asked, did they have to write? To read?

So you can fill out job applications, write reports, read instructions on how to repair a pipe or wire a fixture, I suggested. Pragmatism pacified them temporarily. Before long, though, I knew they would start grumbling again or worse—stop attending class.

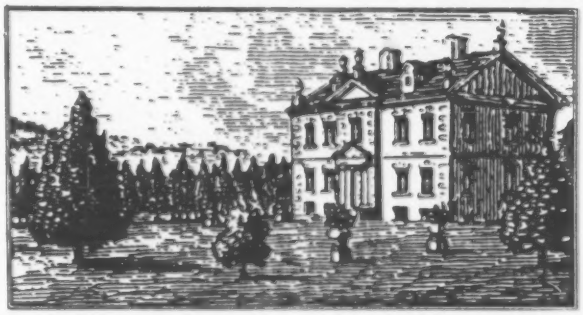
So I experimented. First, I brought in literature by black writers such as Alice Walker, Maya Angelou, and Langston Hughes. While both my students and I enjoyed these writers, I felt it was important that I expose my students to a variety of writers, even if these writers didn't directly address my students' concerns. I wondered: would my students seriously consider the work of writers who were not black, who did not explore black history nor the current condition of black people in today's society?

Perhaps, I thought, Brown University Professor Jacob Neusner's "The Speech The Graduates Didn't Hear" might address this question. Rather than rally the students with the typical "conquer the world" speech, Neusner accuses both students and professors of academic negligence:

> For four years we created an altogether forgiving world, in which whatever slight effort you gave was all that was demanded. When you did not come to class, we overlooked it. When you did not keep appointments, we made new ones. When your work came in beyond deadline, we pretended not to care.

I asked my students to write in their journals about whether they agreed or disagreed with Neusner's assertions. While most students took on the task, a few snickered at Neusner's audacity or worse—mine. Cecelia, a young woman who often sat in the back row filling out job applications, looked up, pen poised, and said, haughtily, "How should I know? I ain't never been to college."

Weeks later, after some of my students had told me stories of crime in their neighborhoods, I chided myself for bringing in the Neusner speech. Most had complained about drug dealing and the sound of gun shots at night. Gloria, who sometimes brought her little boy to class, told me she once saw a man burn to death behind the wheel of his car in front of her apartment building. She had called the police, but they arrived too late—as usual, she added.



No doubt my students' daily lives had little in common with the lives of Brown University students. Yet, I wondered, weren't my students, like Brown students, in college to better themselves and improve their job prospects? And weren't there students at both Laney and Brown who expected companies to offer them high paying jobs upon graduation, even though they had put little effort into their classes? After all, my students' "dream houses" (an assignment I'd given them in descriptive writing) were full of expensive furniture, swimming pools, sports cars—the very material items I suspect might furnish the "dream houses" of Brown students. I wasn't persuaded, as I had been earlier, that the author's social class, race, or intended audience should have hindered my students' understanding of this speech.

Shortly after the Neusner speech, I got myself in trouble again—this time with a John Updike story. In "A&P" a young market checker named Sammy becomes infatuated with Queenie who, with her friends, parades through the market's aisles in bathing suit and bare feet. The store manager, objecting to their dress, upbraids them. Ultimately, Sammy quits his job partly because he disagrees with the manager's enforcement of store policy and partly to impress Queenie who hardly registers his noble gesture.

Lilton, one of a few men who floated in and out of the primarily female WIST program, called Sammy a wimp. "If that was me," he boasted, "I would of had that woman." I pointed out that Sammy was probably intimidated by Queenie's upper middle class status, and that Sammy expressed this in his imaginary comparison of her family with his:

> Her father and the other men . . . standing around in ice-cream coats and bow ties and the women . . . in sandals picking at herring snacks on toothpicks . . . . When my parents have somebody over they get lemonade and if it's a real racy affair Schlitz in tall glasses with 'They'll Do It Every Time' cartoons stencilled on. (128)

Despite Sammy's intimidation, the class still felt that he was stupid to quit his job over a girl and that "A&P" was one of the dumbest stories they had ever read. Surprised by their unsympathetic condemnation of both the story and Sammy, I asked, "Have any of you ever quit a job over a moral principle?"

"Hell no!" came the chorus. It's hard enough to find a job, my students complained, and then quit for no reason! When I asked them why Updike wrote the story, they shook their heads in disgust. "Who cares!" someone said.

Fortunately, I had more success with poetry, specifically the sexually explicit poems of Sharon Olds. I brought in Olds' work because I thought the shameless bluntness and honesty of her work might shock my students into attention. Certainly, I hoped that the simple language, ordinary speech rhythm, and narrative quality of Olds' work would undercut my students' stereotypes of poetry.

After reading the opening lines of "Topography" aloud—

> After we flew across the country we
> got into bed, laid our bodies
> delicately together, like maps laid
> face to face. East to West, my
> San Francisco against your New York,
> your
> Fire Island against my Sonoma, my
> New Orleans deep in your Texas

—I paused and took in the hoots, whistles, smirks and frowns and decided my planned lecture on "Figurative Language" was unnecessary, even ludicrous. Apparently, my students had already figured out the meaning of extended metaphor.

After I read the concluding lines—

> all four bodies of the sky
> burn above us, sealing us together
> all our cities twin cities
> all our states united, one
> nation, liberty and justice for all. (58)

—Lilton frantically fanned his face with his journal in jest while students shouted, "Who is this woman?" "What's her name?" An older woman complained, "She ought to have her mouth washed out." Another woman shook her head and muttered, "Blasphemous."

My students created such a ruckus that the Business English instructor from next door walked in and asked tersely, "What class is this?" After I apologized for the noise, she said, "I realize there's interaction going on here, but my class is taking a test. I'll have to talk to the dean about this." She turned abruptly and left. Several students imitated her as they often did when administrative people came in and made announcements.

"Did you see how upset she was? Let's keep it down," I said.

"That's 'cause she ain't having half as much fun!" Letonia shouted at the wall that separated our classrooms.

Despite my run-in with my next door neighbor, I was pleased with my students' response to Olds. No one accused her of being "obscure" or asked "Why can't she just say what she means?"—two common complaints lodged against poets by students.

• • •

I've had little contact with WIST students since the semester ended. Occasionally, I bump into Yolanda, who was one of my most disciplined students. Now she's in an aeronautics program at another community college. Cecelia, Yolanda tells me, is working on her GED. Janice, a student who meticulously assisted me with photocopying and other clerical duties, had gotten a job as a security guard.

All these accomplishments please me. But I wonder about the other students, too, especially the ones who stopped coming to class, who seemed to give up. I wonder about Anthony who had spent time in prison. He wrote that his eyes were the windows of his "dream house." And Lilton, who told me he was going to dazzle me and amaze me with his journal, a journal he never handed in and presumably never wrote.

And then there was Rose. Although she completed my class, I never heard news of her. She liked to recite Gwendolyn Brooks' blunt and brutal poem "We Real Cool" out loud:

> The Pool Players
> Seven at the Golden Shovel
>
> We real cool. We
> Left school. We
>
> Lurk late. We
> Strike straight. We
>
> Sing sin. We
> Thin gin. We
>
> Jazz June. We
> Die soon. (72)

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Updike, John. "A&P". *Subject and Strategy*. Ed. Paul Eschholz, Alfred Rosen. 4th ed. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988. 124-131.

Janet Goldberg also teaches at Golden Gate University. The above article is from a book of essays she is writing.

REviews

BOOKS TO REVIEW

If you are interested in reviewing any of the following books, please notify the editor, (see page 2). The book will be sent to you, and your review should be submitted within two months of receiving the book. Please follow the proper manuscript form (see page 2).

Barnet, Sylvan, ed. *The Harper Anthology of Fiction*. HarperCollins, 1991.

Behrens, Laurence and Leonard J. Rosen. *Writing and Reading Across the Curriculum*. 4th Ed. HarperCollins, 1991.

Booth, Wayne C. and Marshall W. Gregory. *The Harper & Row Rhetoric: Writing as Thinking, Thinking as Writing*. 2nd ed. HarperCollins, 1991.

Carino, Peter. *The Basic College Writer*. Scott, Foresman, 1990.

Clifford, John, ed. *The Experience of Reading: Louise Rosenblatt and Reader-Response Theory*. Boynton/Cook, 1991.

Collins, James L., ed. *Vital Signs 2: Teaching and Learning Language Collaboratively*. Boynton/Cook, 1991.

Cooper, Marilyn and Michael Holzman. *Writing as Social Action*. Boynton/Cook, 1989.

Covino, William A. *Forms of Wondering: A Dialogue on Writing, for Writers*. Boynton/Cook, 1990.

Goshgarian, Gary, ed. *The Contemporary Reader*. 3rd ed. Scott/Foresman, 1990.

Gunner, Jeanne and Ed Frankel. *The Course of Ideas*. 2nd ed. HarperCollins, 1991.

Guth, Hans P. *New English Handbook*. 3rd ed. Wadwsorth, 1990.

Hairston, Maxine and John J. Ruszkiewicz. *The Scott, Foresman Handbook with Writing Guide*. HarperCollins, 1991.

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Jensen, George H. *From Texts to Test: Mastering Academic Discourse*. HarperCollins, 1991.

Kennedy, X.J. *An Introduction to Fiction*. 5th ed. HarperCollins, 1991.

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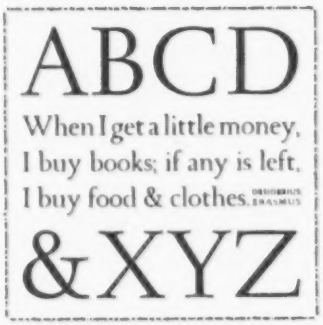
Kennedy, X.J., et al. *The Bedford Reader*. 4th ed. Bedford Books of St. Martin's, 1991

Kinneavy, James L., et al. *Writing in the Liberal Arts Tradition*. 2nd ed. Harper & Row, 1990.

Lannon, John M. *Technical Writing*. 5th ed. HarperCollins, 1991.

Lauer, Janice, et al. *Four Worlds of Writing*. 3rd ed. HarperCollins, 1991.

Lawn, Beverly, ed. *Literature: 150 Masterpieces of Fiction, Poetry, and Drama*. St. Martin's, 1991.



Layton, Marilyn Smith. *Intercultural Journeys Through Reading and Writing*. HarperCollins, 1991.

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Lutz, William and Harry Brent. *The Critical Reader: Responding Through Writing*. Harper & Row, 1990.

Muller, Gilbert H. *The McGraw-Hill Reader: Themes in the Disciplines*. 4th ed. McGraw-Hill, 1991.

Ronald, Kate and Hepzibah Roskelly, eds. *Farther Along: Transforming Dichotomies in Writing and Composition*. Boynton/Cook, 1990.

Ruggiero, Vincent Ryan. *The Art of Thinking: A Guide to Critical and Creative Thought*. 3rd ed. HarperCollins, 1991.

Scholes, Robert, et al. *Elements of Literature: Essay, Fiction, Poetry, Drama, Film*. 4th ed. Oxford UP, 1991.

Schwartz, Mimi, ed. *Writer's Craft, Teacher's Art: Teaching What We Know*. Boynton/Cook, 1991.

Simons, Elizabeth Radin. *Student Worlds, Student Words: Teaching Writing Through Folklore*. Boynton/Cook, 1990.

Taylor, Ann. *Shaping the Short Essay*. HarperCollins, 1991.

Verburg, Carol J. *Ourselves Among Others: Cross-Cultural Readings for Writers*. 2nd ed. Bedford Books of St. Martin's, 1991.

Wallace, Robert. *Writing Poems*. 3rd ed. HarperCollins, 1991.

Zinsser, William. *On Writing Well: An Informal Guide to Writing Nonfiction*. 4th ed. HarperCollins, 1990.

Notices

CONFERENCES

3-4 May 1991. RENAISSANCE CONFERENCE OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA: STATE OF THE ARTS—RELIGION AND POLITICS IN RENAISSANCE CULTURE. Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

For information contact Stanley Stewart, Dept. of English, UC Riverside, Riverside, CA 92521-0323.

24-26 May 1991. AMERICAN LITERATURE ASSOCIATION. Washington, D.C.

For information write Alfred Bendixen, Dept. of English, CSU Los Angeles, 5151 State University Drive, Los Angeles, CA 90032.

6-9 June 1991. ADE WESTERN SEMINAR. Claremont McKenna and Pomona Colleges. For information write David Laurence, Association of Departments of English, 10 Astor Place, New York, NY 10003-6981.

20-22 June 1991. SEVENTH ANNUAL YOUNG RHETORICIANS' CONFERENCE. Monterey Peninsula College, Monterey, CA.

Maxine Hairston (University of Texas) will deliver the keynote speech; Gabriele Rico (San Jose State University) and Sheridan Blau (UC Santa Barbara) will present a Saturday morning session on "Literature and the Personal Response." Other sessions include workshops on "Responding to Student Writing" (Kim Flachman, CSU Bakersfield), "Composing as a Woman" (Elizabeth Flynn, Michigan Tech), and "Moving Toward the Interactive Classroom" (Judith Stanford, Rivier College, New Hampshire), and sessions exploring "Writing about Literature in the Two-Year College" (Bill Lay, Kalamazoo Valley Community College), "Rethinking The Canon" (Elaine Apthorp, San Jose State University), and "The Professional Self-Image of Composition Teachers (Hans Guth, SJSU).

Fees: $40. For more information call Hans Guth (408) 924-4435 or Gabriele Rico (408) 646-4100 or write them at Department of English, San Jose State University, One Washington Square, San Jose, CA 95192-0090.

4-7 August 1991. ELEVENTH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CRITICAL THINKING AND EDUCATIONAL REFORM. Center for Critical Thinking and Moral Critique, Sonoma State University, Sonoma, CA.

Featured speakers include Sharon Balin (University of Manitoba), John Chaffee (LaGuardia Community College), Joanne Kurfiss (Santa Clara University), Vincent Ruggiero (author and educator), Alan Schoenfeld (UC Berkeley), Marlys and Charles Witte (University of Arizona), and sessions will focus on four topics: Building a Sound General Education Program, Adopting a Campus-Wide Statement on Educational Goals Focused on Critical Thinking, Bringing Critical Thinking Into Discipline-Specific Instruction, and Establishing Critical Thinking Courses.

In addition, a pre-conference workshop, offered 2-3 August and open only to conference registrants, will address The Art of Critical Teaching: Infusing Critical Thinking into College and University Instruction. Dr. Richard W. Paul (Director of the Center for Critical Thinking) and Dr. Gerald Nosich (Professor of Philosophy, University of New Orleans) will lead the workshop.

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS AND PROPOSALS

inside english is planning future issues that will focus on the following topics:

- Cultural/Ethnic/Gender/Age Diversity in the Writing Classroom
- Reflecting Cultural/Ethnic/Gender/Age Diversity in Planning a Literature Curriculum
- Teaching to the Many While Not Neglecting the Few
- Strategies for Revitalizing the Writing Instructor
- Strategies for Revitalizing the Literature Instructor

All English instructors are invited to submit manuscripts on these and other topics of concern to our profession. In addition, *i.e.* invites reviews of writing and literature texts and books of pedagogy and philosophy pertinent to the teaching of English. The journal is especially interested in reviews of novels, short story collections, and volumes of poetry (current or past) that have nourished you as an instructor and lover of language and literature.

Please follow the format briefly described on page 2 of each issue of *i.e.* For a more detailed description of the guidelines for submission, please write the editor for an "*inside english* Style Sheet."

1992 CCCC ANNUAL CONVENTION

10 May deadline. Session proposals for the 1992 CCCC Annual Convention, 19-21 March, Cincinnati, Ohio. The conference theme: Contexts, Communities, and Constraints: Sites of Composing and Communicating.

For information contact CCCC Information Services, NCT, 1111 Kenyon Road, Urbana, IL, 61891.

SIBLING RELATIONSHIPS IN LITERATURE

1 June deadline. The editors invite contributions for an anthology on sibling relationships in literature. Suggested topics include the effect on characters of birth order and of the loss of a sibling, especially a twin; the significance of siblings to plots; cultural and historical variations in sibling relationships; sibling rivalry or cooperation in fairy tales and adolescent literature and its influence on the reader's perception of place in the family; and the effect on characters of being the only male or female in a family. Essays may treat any period or genre and should address the social, cultural, and psychological implications of the topic.

Abstracts of five hundred words are due 1 June 1991; manuscripts of fifteen to twenty-five pages are due 30 December 1991. Send inquiries and abstracts to JoAnna Stephens Mink, Dept. of English, Mankato State University, Mankato, MN 56002-8400.

COMMUNICATION AND WOMEN'S FRIENDSHIPS

1 July deadline. The editors seek essays for a collection on the role of all forms of communication in the development of women's friendships in literaure, especially on how written and oral discourse strengthens or hinders understanding between women. Papers may be on any period or genre. Discussions of women's friendships with men will also be considered.

(NOTICES, Continued on Page 20)

DOUBLE CON GAME

(Continued from Page 3)

responsibility for his or her own writing, in much the same way that [Carl] Rogers . . . suggests the counselor should do for non-directive counseling" (116). There, the instructor can create an "open-ended, caring, low-risk atmosphere similar to that of the therapeutic counseling session recommended for learning situations by Carl Rogers" (120).

Thomas and Thomas argue that Rogers is right in noting that "students learn more when teachers are open than when they are judgmental" (120), and, like others, they focus on the need to consider the role of student self-esteem in student learning. Along the same lines, Walter S. Minot proposes "a model for building the self-concept or self-esteem of students through carefully designed writing assignments that emphasize persona" and proposes upbeat topics stressing personal strengths and achievements (353). Donald Daiker addresses the question from another angle, exhorting us to learn to praise, even if praise means we must abandon absolute standards:

> We need to understand that what deserves praise is, for a teacher of writing, a relative and not an absolute question. . . . Following relative standards, we are in no sense dishonest or condescending in praising one writer for what we might ignore or criticize in another—even within the same class. (107)

Such relative standards, Daiker argues, are the ones we follow "in most of the teaching we do outside the classroom"; we use them, for example, in helping children learn "how to talk or how to color or how to swim" (107). Daiker uses the analogy of teaching his six-year-old daughter Pam to hit a softball. Even when Pam barely hit the ball, she was rewarded with lavish praise. More praise followed, and in high school Pam made the varsity team (107).

What is the problem with such a positive, caring stance? What is wrong with such praise? One problem is that Daiker's analogy does not quite hold up. College is not the sandlot softball field; it *is* the varsity team. Freshman composition is the place where the coaches are caring, yes, but also demanding and consistent in their standards because they respect their players' capacities. And the teaching of freshman writing takes place inside a classroom where the students are no longer children. Nor, as the therapeutic stance implies, are they sick people whom teachers can heal.

Minot reveals the dangerous nature of the therapist's stance when he justifies writing as therapy by saying that writing was used in the 1960s and 1970s "to stimulate self expression and self understanding among the *mentally ill*" (359, emphasis mine). This model assumes a dangerous premise: that writing students are somehow damaged or incomplete personalities that we as instructors can repair or complete. Granted, Minot warns that teachers should never attempt "to deal with the psychological problems of students individually" (359) but handle them only in a general way, and he advises that the stance is both limited and positive, anyway. But the teacher who perceives himself or herself as healer is entering treacherous territory, for the emphasis on feeling good rather than doing well demeans and manipulates the student.

No one denies the psychological components of the writing process. Writing is a personal act, far more personal than bubbling in the answers on an objective test, the standard activity in many college classrooms. Writing exposes vulnerabilities as it reveals the self. But to focus so tightly on the link between feeling and writing may actually erode the self esteem of both instructor and student.

Feelings cannot be denigrated. Feelings cannot be evaluated, for who is to say what

feelings are wrong? When the instructor becomes a therapist, he or she transforms the classroom into a counseling center and distances it from the academic community. It is a seductive move, for it promotes such good feelings. There are no bad grades here, no bad writers, only misguided or troubled students. Praise is wonderful to bestow, and recipients are so grateful, so docile. It is easy to ignore the dynamics of the community of healing, easy to accept the con game.

The Therapist conveys an explicit, if unspoken, message to his or her clients: "I'm ok, you're defective." To give unmerited praise may assume that students are not capable of earning it. To focus on emotion rather than on ideas denigrates students by assuming that they cannot do what we did when we were students—think. Or perhaps we assume that students are too fragile to take criticism, to meet the challenges we once met. Perhaps this generation of students needs to be judged by different, relative standards because this generation is not like us.

Students quickly learn to accept their new role, to play client to the instructor's therapist. They will allow the instructor to feed off their neediness, for they know that very little will be expected of them. They willingly make the trade-off: self-esteem bargained away for the easy ride through the course. No real self-esteem develops in this classroom, for self-esteem cannot be given away; it must be earned. How is one to shine if writing is largely a way of expressing feeling, and all feelings are similarly praised? The dynamics of this classroom, predicated on a vision of the student as inferior and of the instructor as physician or psychiatrist or loving parent, deprive the student of the very qualities that could lead to genuine growth. Students as clients or children may be patronized, indulged, flattered, or stroked, but they are not challenged to take on the difficult tasks of linking feeling to thought, of disciplining themselves, of accepting criticism—activities that would develop true self respect.

The Con

Both the Fellow Artist and the Therapist pretend to empower students. The Fellow Artist offers membership in a new elite, the academic discourse community. The Therapist promises to free students from inadequacy and to open the path to self-actualization. And indeed, the issue with both stances is power—power without responsibility. Pretending to share power, the Fellow Artist and the Therapist hold on to it. The Artist remains in control of the workshop where he or she is indubitably the better artist, the inspiration to the apprentices. The Therapist is healer to the sick. But neither the Artist nor the Therapist retains the responsibilities of the teaching role. By concealing power in these new stances, the Artist or Therapist can escape the unpleasant choices or consequences that haunt the traditional teacher. Artists and Therapists can evade the hard decisions: failing the student we like so much, assigning a low grade to the student who tries so hard, moving the underprepared student out of our classroom to the non-credit, remedial course. Artists and Therapists can avoid the grueling work of exploring the basics in an interesting way, for the basics are no longer relevant to them.

The new rhetorical stances appear to be kinder, gentler roles. But they are a con. They do not redistribute power. They misuse it. The Therapist demeans the students, reducing them to the level of the mentally damaged or developmentally arrested. The Artist deludes the classroom coterie, offering them the chance to pose as writers rather than the opportunity to learn to write. In either case, the power remains with the instructor, only now it is the power of manipulation, power without responsibility, power disguised as love. Mary Rose O'Reilly warns,

> We are still getting stuck in some old-fashioned (though philosophically respectable) places, trying to figure out, for example, the relationship between power and love. I used to think the student-centered classroom was predicated on diffusion of power. As a pacifist, I was eager to give it away. I found this to be dangerous and confusing to students. Whether we like it or not, as teachers, we have inherited our fathers' light sabre and we have to learn how to use it. The worst thing we can do is pretend we don't have power. (146).

If we openly acknowledge our power, we must accept its consequences. We must be ready for the moment when caring is no solution for the student who simply does no work, when the term "work-in-progress" cannot excuse the fifth missed deadline, when the instructor must leave the circle of discussion and stand outside it. We must be ready to accept the resistance, consternation, and criticism of students who would prefer not to think or work too hard.

If we deny our power by concealing it, we risk becoming Fellow Artists or Therapists, controlling through manipulation. Ultimately, the instructor who assumes either role denies students what they really need. The Fellow Artist or Therapist remains empowered and safe within his or her own delusions—a benevolent dictator with empty hands.

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Minot, Walter S. "Personality and Persona: Developing the Self." *Rhetoric Review* 7.2 (1989): 352-63.

O'Reilley, Mary Rose. "'Exterminate . . . the Brutes'—And Other Things That Go Wrong in Student-Centered Teaching." *College English* 5.2 (1989): 142-46.

Probst, Robert E. "Transactional Theory and Response to Student Writing." *Writing and Response*. Ed. Chris M. Anson. Urbana, IL: NCTE, 1989. 68-79.

Thomas, Dene, and Gordon Thomas. "The Use of Rogerian Reflection in Small-Group Writing Conferences." *Writing and Response*. Ed. Chris M. Anson. Urbana, IL: NCTE, 1989. 114-26.

Ms. Wershoven, who teaches communications at Palm Beach Community College in Boca Raton, Florida, has presented an article "not in the mainstream of attitudes usually voiced in [inside english]."

THE $ACRAMENTO $CENE

The Cycle Spins

by GORDON TAYLOR
Yuba College

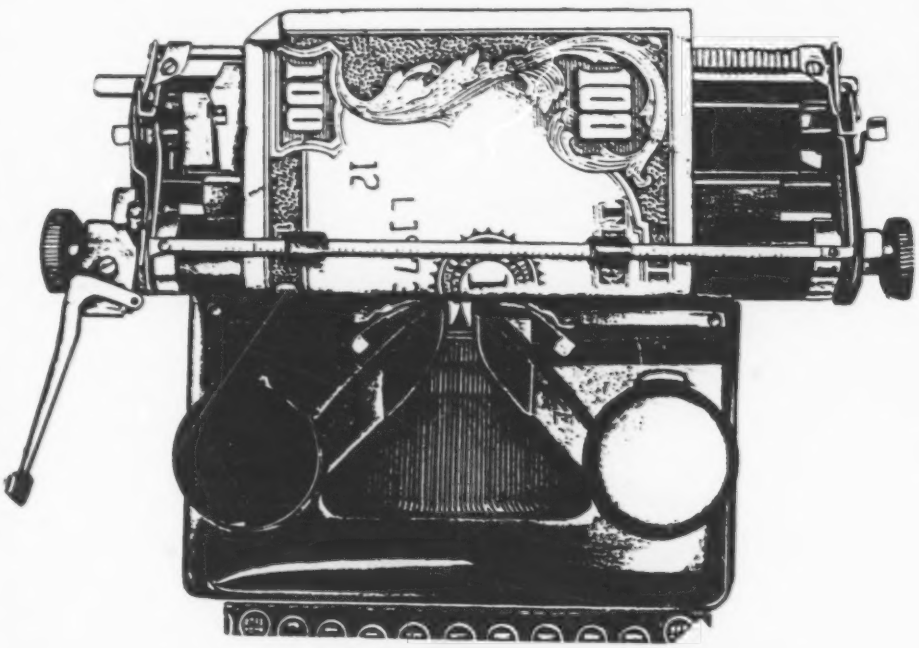
Events are running at vertiginous speeds these past few days. Things are heating up at the Capitol. The Democrats are facing off against the Republicans; the Republicans are facing off against the Democrats; the California Teachers' Association is facing off against the Governor; the Governor is taking on the California Teachers' Association; and, rather curiously, Willie Brown, the Speaker of the Assembly, seems somewhere in between.

The whole fuss has to do with whose money is going to be taken away because there is not enough to go around, and it is a little too easy to guess that it is the money that is at issue rather than what the money might be spent for. All the objections are covered over with moral pronouncements that, however, smack ever so slightly of ideology and political power. When the budget is finally settled, some groups' power will have been substantially strengthened at the expense of the losers.

From the schools' point of view (mainly K-12 and the community colleges, the universities have different problems) the famous Proposition 98 could be more than simply a bone of contention; the metaphor, however, may be plenty apt since the dispute already shows signs of a real dogfight. All of the schools' organizations have undertaken campaigns to stop the Legislature from suspending 98 (it takes a two-thirds vote to do so). The Governor is greatly pressuring the Legislature to suspend it so that he can reduce the allocations by $2 billion. Other forces are also at work. In the name of fairness, many groups say that the schools should suffer along with everyone else: the families on AFDC (described by some as "food for kids"), some of the supplementary social security payments, and such social programs.

Whether 98 will or will not be suspended is, at present, by no means clear. Some groups on the right do not want to raise taxes; others on the left want to protect the social programs; and so both groups want to suspend. What percentage of the Legislature these two groups amount to is not entirely clear, but if they are more than a third or so, they could end up with enough others to do the deed. John Vasconcellos, who stopped by Yuba College the other day on his way to somewhere else, indicated that his priorities are to protect, first, "food for kids" (as he called it); second, the renter's credit (since more poor people rent than own houses—owners of which were rescued by Proposition 13), and, third, Proposition 98. In other words, we might infer that he, for example, would let 98 go if necessary to save the first two. He also proposes that the deficit be divided in half: half should be paid for by raising taxes and half paid for by cutting the State's expenses. Any increase in taxes requires a two-thirds vote of the Legislature, however.

The California Teachers' Association (CTA) and Governor Wilson seem on a collision course. CTA has raised a million or so dollars to pay for a huge advertising campaign against Mr. Wilson's proposal to suspend Proposition 98. But one is caught in a dilemma here: Should CTA get its comeuppance and lose along with the schools (since CTA's primary interest is surviving as an organization rather than having an abiding interest in education; also maybe it could have shown its good will by contributing its million dollars and some of its other contributions to political causes to the schools' deficit), or should the Governor have to face the music (a particularly discordant style of) and give the schools what they claim they need in order to do the work that our society demands of them? And Willie Brown needs to work both sides of the issue. The Democrats receive a lot of money from CTA in campaign contributions, and CTA is calling in its political chits. Mr. Brown sees the necessity to balance the budget and yet needs to acknowledge his party's debt to CTA. He went so far at the Democratic Party's convention recently as to accuse Mr. Wilson of wanting "to break the labor movement in this state—and he wants to start with the teachers." How he will reconcile these contrary positions may enchant us all. Politics is a fascinating game to watch even if it is a disconcerting one.



CTA is also conflicting with a coalition of business, labor, health organizations, and public agencies called Project 90. The group, which last year sponsored Proposition 111 to increase the gasoline tax and modify the financing of the schools, sent a letter to the Governor and leaders in the Legislature urging that 98 be suspended. CTA couldn't stand it and fired a letter back threatening some kind of retribution if Project 90 did not mend its deviant ways.

In the meanwhile, most of us are facing having to cut our own expenses or cutting into reserves since we face deficits this year as well as next. Some CCs seem to be counting on their reserves to carry them through even if it means running down their reserves to whatever level they think they can get away with; others are looking to actually cut expenses by reducing the number and quantity of things we do. It is, no doubt, the part-time teachers and the students who will suffer the most. Added to these unpleasantnesses is our anticipating hordes of students to filter down into the CC system from the University of California (UC) and the California State University (CSU) since both these institutions have raised their fees for the coming year, and UC additionally is reducing the number of new students that it will admit. Ironically, UC's action does something that the CCs and the Legislature have been trying to get it to do for years: to take only the top 12.5 percent of graduating high school seniors instead of the 14.5 percent (or so) that they started taking back when its enrollments were dropping. It is probably this act, more than raising the fees, that will drive some students to try for CSU or even the CCs since, even with the increases—CSU's tuition fees are $936 and UC's are $2,470; increases of $156 and $340 respectively—they remain, comparatively speaking, a bargain. Even so, as is the usual case, a number of students protested and complained.

While all of these events are transpiring, the Legislature is venting its collective spleen because of the restrictions the voters placed on it by Proposition 140. Instead of looking to put its respective houses in order, it set up a very lucrative golden handshake, which actually encouraged the most able and most experienced to leave, rather than to selectively undertake to send away the deadwood that naturally builds up in bureaucratic organizations. Some columnists and political commentators, specifically in the *Sacramento Bee*, have not been kind. One described how, the other day, the Assembly spent three hours in the middle of the budget debacle giving a rousing send off to one of its members who had been under investigation for some shady relationships with some shady, convicted business type. He also said that these kinds of traditional events "put on display in full flower the egos that make the Legislature such an arrogant, insular and self-indulgent place." One commentator even suggested that the Legislature, after all its carryings on, in the end deserved what it got. Another pointed out that back in the sixties Jesse Unruh persuaded us all that California needed a full time, professional Legislature staffed with experts on policy who would be responsive to social changes and less influenced by special interests. It seems now that the legislators have too much time to do their work, have come to see their positions as a career rather than as serving at the pleasure of the voters. There is an irony, however: at the same time that they voted for Proposition 140, the voters returned most of the incumbents. Voters apparently think that their own representative is ok; it is all those others who do the bad things. But, then, we shouldn't pretend. I suppose, that humans always act consistently.

As I write (mid-March), some bipartisan legislative teams have been conducting secret meetings to attempt to restructure the way the State conducts its business. I cannot provide any details since these committees will not release their report until later in the month. Preliminary reports, however, are encouraging. It may well be that our legislators are willing to give up their partisan bickering and finally come up with a long range plan that will solve some of the underlying problems. We certainly may hope so.

May your summer be as pleasant as it can be under the cloud of troubles that casts its shadow over the State and our community colleges.

This version of *Sacramento Scene* is my last. I took over the column in 1980 when Jim Cagnacci gave it up to become the President o. ECCTYC, and I think it is time, some might be inclined to say high time, for another voice to be heard. I have enjoyed doing what I could do further the cause, to explain the events as clearly as I could, and to have the opportunity to comment, even to sound off, a bit on the events and follies of life in Sacramento and the behavior of its ancillary organizations. I thank all those who have spoken to me and expressed their appreciation for my attempts to clarify complex events and issues. I wish Karen Grosz (Santa Monica College) who will take over *Sacramento Scene* the best of luck and the courage to take on what is sometimes a difficult task.

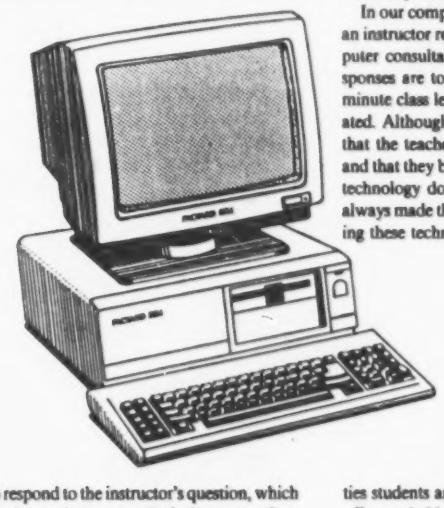
COLLABORATION AND COMPUTERS

(Continued from Page 5)

Next, a student is selected to transcribe the discussion session that will follow. All of my students have had the opportunity to transcribe a class discussion; as they become familiar with the process, many of them volunteer enthusiastically for the position. As the class discusses each of the questions on the screen, the student-transcriber tries to record as much of the discussion as possible. At the end of the discussion, copies of these class notes are printed for each member of the class.

My students and I have found that having a student transcribe responses has several positive effects. First, it frees instructors from feeling that they have to periodically reiterate what has been said, since the class dialogue is already on the computer screen. Also, the instructor can leave the computer desk and walk around the classroom to facilitate the discussion, creating the possibility of a less formal, academic relationship between class members and their instructor. Discussion sessions are most productive when students and their teacher work together to create answers to issues under discussion, and the students become much more active participants in the learning process. During this activity students are not only creating an evolving discussion, but also collaborating in producing a written text.

Furthermore, when students can see their and their classmates' ideas on the screen, they can reflect more easily on the ideas presented and reshape their own ideas in consideration of other students' ideas. The focus in this activity shifts from the teacher giving knowledge to the students creating knowledge, while the teacher encourages and directs the process. In this situation students are also more likely to discuss with one another rather than simply



to respond to the instructor's question, which is what students normally feel most comfortable doing even though the activity is ostensibly a discussion.

In this situation students do not have much time to worry about how their thoughts will look on the screen, but they do have the opportunity to see what their ideas look like and how they read on the screen and later in printed form. As an effective strategy for overcoming writer's block, this activity encourages the students to make spontaneous connections between thinking and writing processes and to remain primarily involved in their thinking process rather than being focused on verbalizing the "perfect" or correct response.

Certainly it is intriguing to see a group opinion or dialogue evolving as an issue is debated and the interchange recorded. Students do get more involved. Sometimes, however, students as well as their instructor can become so involved in saying what they think needs to be said that they forget to listen carefully. With a record of a discussion to reflect on later, at home or in the library, a discussion participant has the opportunity to rethink what was said and to determine what relevant points were made.

I realize that I was fortunate to have had a positive experience on my second day in the computer classroom. Because the "magic" happened the first time, I felt more inclined to experiment with other new ways of having students work together—discussing and thinking, recording and revising—on their computer screens. As the quarter progressed, I continued to develop other plans for my students to try out; we were learning together.

The Second Plan: Collating Group Answers to Discussion Questions for Class Review

This second plan begins with groups of three students each working at a computer terminal answering a set of three or four questions. When the students finish, their answers are transferred to the teacher's computer and collated so that if, for example, there are four groups, answer one will have four different responses, answer two will have four different responses, etc. The collated responses projected on the overhead screen then serve as a text for further analysis and discussion. Students benefit from seeing alternative viewpoints and interpretations of issues as they are generated through the answers to the discussion questions.

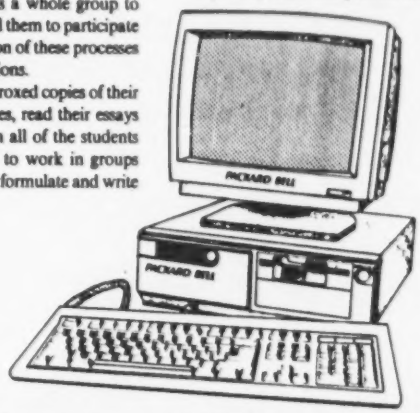
In our computer classroom we found that an instructor really needs the aid of the computer consultant if the different groups' responses are to be collated during the fifty-minute class lesson in which they are generated. Although this type of project requires that the teacher and consultant plan ahead and that they be flexible since problems with technology do occur, the final results have always made the extra effort worthwile. During these technologically challenging activities students are frequently very helpful and offer workable insights about how to resolve problems, a positive side benefit of working with more complex processes on the computers. The students and their teacher are then working together toward a common goal.

In a traditional classroom, without networked computers, it would not be possible to collate and print up group answers to a set of discussion questions in fifty minutes. More importantly, along with the speed and ease of production, a transformation is taking place in the relationship between the teacher and the students. When we lecture to our students, they are not thinking as actively as we are. When we ask them to write answers to questions together, to read and to write and to evaluate one another's work, we give them the opportunity to become active agents of their own education. We give them permission to see writing as a social/group activity as well as a solitary act.

The Third Plan: Creating Collaborative Peer Critiques

After my students worked in small groups on the computers to generate answers to discussion questions and as a whole group to create class notes, I asked them to participate in the design of a variation of these processes for our peer editing sessions.

Four students, who xeroxed copies of their essays for their classmates, read their essays to the whole class. Then all of the students in groups choose either to work in groups of three at a computer to formulate and write



peer critiques of each of the presented essays, or as a large group, with one student transcribing the peer evaluation process on the teacher's computer. In each case the group peer evaluation is printed up and given to the students who have shared their essays.

Although I had thought that my students would prefer to work on their evaluations in small groups since they meet regularly outside of class in small study groups, they chose to work as a large group and enthusiastically selected a transcriber. They were immediately ready to begin to create a group critique of their classmates' work. Students had to consider their peers' ideas and feelings, apply their editorial expertise, as well as offer supportive and useful advice—challenging tasks, even for the most experienced writing instructor.

In my composition courses students work together as peer editors in study groups outside of class before each assignment is due; therefore, they have some experience critiquing one another's writing. During this classroom activity I observe how students work together as peer editors. Instructors can learn and benefit from the opportunity to hear how their students respond to student texts. I am frequently impressed by the insightfulness and accuracy of student advice. Aware of a writer's sensitivity to advice during these sessions, students working in the computer classroom are creating a supportive learning situation. These sessions can build a sense of mutual understanding, sensitivity to others' feelings and ideas, and, perhaps most importantly, trust. Finally, with the evaluations transcribed on the teacher's computer, students whose work was discussed will have a chance to review and to think more about the suggestions that were made during the class session.

The Fourth Plan: Creating Perspectives on Collaborative Classnotes

While many students already realize that content and meaning are created in a unique way as individuals record thoughts and feelings about an event, the following activity demonstrates this principle quite dramatically. For this exercise, three different students are asked to record a class discussion at their computer terminals. While their notes cannot be projected on the overhead screen, at the end of the discussion each set of notes can be transferred to the teacher's computer, collated, and printed for class members. The collated set can then be projected onto the overhead screen for the class to analyze and evaluate. Besides having a very thorough review of the class's perspective on a particular assignment, from this process students gain insights into how people inevitably perceive "identical" realities differently, evaluating and forming *versions* of the truth despite the fact that they believe themselves simply "reporting the facts," paraphrasing or summarizing a sequence of ideas.

A Conclusion

When I am choreographing these group activities in the computer classroom, I feel a new energy born of many minds imaginatively engaged with one another. I see my roles as a teacher; as a catalyst; as a conductor of a symphony of imaginations; as a facilitator helping students to develop the confidence and ability to think, to compose, and to contribute their own energy to a learning process that is both group and self-directed.

As I think back on my experiences working the computer classroom these past three quarters, I feel fortunate to have been offered the opportunity to explore some of the possibilities that such a teaching environment provides. Although I have taken just the first few steps on a new journey, I anticipate what is to come with excitement, knowing that there are many more class activities waiting to be discovered, articulated, and practiced when as teachers and students, writers, and editors, we work together in a computer classroom setting.

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Marjorie Ford taught at community colleges in the Bay Area for fifteen years. Currently she is a lecturer in Freshman English at Stanford University where she teaches her writing courses in the computer classroom. Writing As Revelation, her second book co-authored with Jon Ford, will be available from HarperCollins in August of this year.

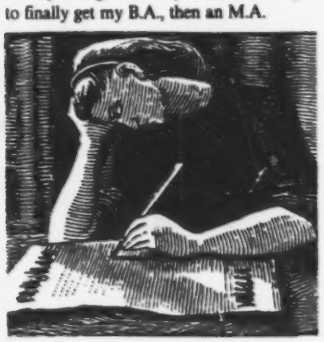
THE DEVELOPMENTAL WRITING CLASSROOM

Sweathogs

by DOLORES LaGUARDIA
San Jose City College

The term "sweathog" is taken from the old *Welcome Back Kotter* television show in which a high school English teacher has returned to his old school to teach a class of what today would be called "at risk" students, students who are bright but do not readily fit into an academic environment. What is a sweathog? A sweathog is an intelligent person who has not used very much of his/her intelligence on school. A sweathog was out partying, or working, or taking care of little brothers and sisters, or smoking in the john instead of acquiring basic math and language skills. A sweathog wants to do well but doesn't know how. A sweathog is funny and strong. A sweathog is insecure.

That was me, Princess Sweathog. I hated high school, smoked in the restroom, talked back to my teachers, cut school, but I did manage to graduate . . . fourteenth from the bottom of my class, with a "D" average. Several years later I realized I didn't want to spend my life waitressing, so I enrolled in a local junior college; for the first time in my academic life, I actually wanted to do well, but I didn't know how. I didn't know the difference between doing homework and studying; I didn't have the basic math and English skills a high school graduate should have. For the following ten years I made up for the twelve that went before. In between raising two children and working full time, I managed to squeeze in enough classes—usually at night or early in the morning—to finally get my B.A., then an M.A.



I didn't make it by myself. I had teachers who needled and nagged, who pushed and praised, who believed in me when I couldn't believe in myself. Now it's my turn to push and praise.

As sweathogs are just beginning to learn to expect the best from themselves, we, as their teachers, must recognize and respond directly to their special needs.

• **We need to know that these students were not read to as children,** so aural appreciation of language is foreign to them. We need to show them that language is meant to be heard as well as read, and we need to make opportunities to read aloud in class. Having students respond to a target essay is a common assignment; why not have the students respond to an essay we read to them rather than only to essays they read themselves?

I tried this by reading selections from Mark Mathabane's *Kaffir Boy* as part of a unit on South Africa. For several weeks I began each class with ten minutes reading aloud. The students had been told that they would be writing an essay in response to the reading and thus were advised to take notes. The first part of *Kaffir Boy* describes Mathabane's childhood in the Alexandria township and the fear and poverty that permeated every aspect of his life; the second part concerns how his mother forced him to attend school and how, eventually, school and sports replaced fear and poverty. The students then wrote an essay exploring why education is a powerful tool in changing the circumstances of one's birth; they were instructed to draw upon Mathabane's experiences and their own. I was not sure that they would see the parallels between their lives and his but they did. Angela wrote about how she too had grown up around violence and how the quiet of the library where she did her homework soothed the noise of home: "School will not only help me make a better life in the future; it is the better part of my life right now. I like to be here more than I like to be at home." I knew reading aloud was valuable when I overheard one student ask another to listen to what he had written to see if it "sounded" right.

• **We need to know that these students haven't seen a play, been to a concert, visited a museum,** so they haven't developed a connection between themselves and the culture. We need to design assignments that will draw students into the culture. Writing classes are ideal for this because we can assign reports on various community cultural events or assign essays that respond to some of the universal issues as they have been explored through the different arts.

Introducing sweathogs to culture is one of the most rewarding parts of my job. I do it a little at a time, beginning with listening to selections from Bach and Wagner; I then ask them to describe what they "see" in what they hear. We then do exercises in using metaphor to describe sensory experience: What does Bach "look" like? What does Wagner smell like? I try to coordinate the music I use with concerts scheduled in the area. Living in a major metropolitan area where there are several colleges and universities makes it relatively easy and inexpensive for students to attend such events. I've tried scheduling several ways, from arranging for a class field trip to a specific concert or opera to providing students with a list of local performances and requiring them to attend and report on one. Going together in a group is best but requires a great deal of advanced scheduling, money collecting, and transportation arranging; however, it's worth it. It becomes an occasion, something they get dressed up for and talk about for a long time later. I've also arranged for students to attend plays and poetry readings with the same effect. I'll never forget Roger who had seen ACT's production of *King Lear* and said afterward: "It costs the same as going to a movie but it's better." Yes, it is.

• **We need to know that many of these students will drop out and never graduate,** so it's up to us to establish our own credibility, to work with them, to make ourselves available beyond the classroom, to let them know that we are committed to their academic success. We can give our students our home phone number so they can call us if they're confused about an assignment. We can call students who miss a class. We can take an interest in their personal lives, recognizing that many of them work full time and have yet to make school their number one priority. For them to listen to us, we have to be willing to listen to them.

It's important for our students to know that we have chosen teaching, that we're doing what we want to do, what we think is important. It's also important for them to know that their success is a team effort, that we want them to succeed. It's important that we make a point to meet individually with each student, whether they need it or not, and whenever they need it.

I believe we need to care first, and then their caring will follow.

• **We need to know that these students do not read for pleasure, that they do not share the same points of reference we do,** so we have to explain our terms because, for example, when we refer to a Greek myths it may well be the first time these students have heard the term, and all they knew before was that the Greeks had something to do with fraternities. Vocabulary development needs to be ongoing in every class, not just reading and writing classes, not just technical vocabulary.

It's not uncommon for me to scatter new vocabulary words throughout my lessons. I've even gone so far as to assign extra points for students who then use the words we've discussed in their essays. One popular way to demonstrate the power of words is to show students how to swear without swearing, how the traditional four-letter words are not only crude but imprecise. I knew this lesson worked when another instructor took me into the men's bathroom to see where someone had scrawled that he was "obsequious."

• **We need to know that these students do not know how to study, that they either faked it well enough or caused so much trouble in high school that no one noticed what they didn't know.** We have to not only teach the subject but show these students how to study what we're teaching. We've got to make sure they know not simply what to do but how to do it. Every assignment we make should include vocabulary development and planning and organizing components.

At the beginning of every semester I take time to go over the schedule in detail: when major assignments will be due, when students should begin working on different tasks; then I remind them . . . constantly. Yes, I nag. I also nag them when their notebooks are messy and out of order. I show them how to underline and take notes in their texts, and then I check their progress throughout the semester, praising those who have mastered the art of highlighting. I take nothing for granted, and I demand professional quality. On my syllabus I explain the grading criteria: A, B, C, D, F, and P. A "P" grade means "poor professionalism" and is much worse than an "F"; an "F" means a student didn't know; a "P" means he/she didn't care. It sounds harsh, but reviewing the schedule, constantly reinforcing study skills and giving mini-lessons on

(SWEATHOGS, Continued on Page 15)

A MIRACLE

not the window itself
golden circle radiating
ruby sapphire emerald
but its precise duplication on the wall adjacent
the light waving bending
its mystery suggested a second time
in a quilted sunburst over the
altar
the shimmer in the air the Woman
chest rising as she offers her weaving
deep purple the woof the warp
green for the earth she loves
silver for joy
the shine on our cheeks
for the Child still teasing tides
churned down into the bright foaming
as if sun pouring through dark
waters
the Woman's arms the
jewelled panels
etched in concrete had opened embraced us
as if the Architect knew
how we might breathe here

BEREFT OF CRAFT

Heart: the muscular organ
which pumps blood through the body—
Blood: the fluid which nourishes—
Words I strike from a student's poem.
"Use only when you mean the thing itself,"
I say, "find fresh metaphors."
Lie: a statement known or believed to be
untrue,
uttered with intent to deceive.

Plato called poets liars
at worst, madmen at best.
"We can only create an imitation of an
imitation,"
he wrote, "except when God deprives us
of reason,
then we speak His truth, not our own.
Without inspiration we have only magic
tricks."

"I don't get it," the student replies.
"What's wrong with lying?"
Should I describe the way a shadow falls
across a loved one's face,
his shoulders hunch, he turns away—
my heart breaks, my blood runs cold.

NANCY SCHIFFRIN
Los Angeles City College

"Bereft of Craft" is reprinted from Nancy Shiffrin's first collection of poems, What She Could Not Name *(La Jolla Poets' Press, 1987), and "A Miracle" is from a new collection,* Point Dume, *recently completed. Ms. Schiffrin's non-fiction writings appear in the* Los Angeles Times, New York Magazine, *and other publications. She teaches part-time at Los Angeles City College and has taught private writing workshops.*

THE ESL CLASSROOM

The Story, the Students, and their Sentences

by MIKE RIHERD
Pasadena City College

Whenever we teach a literary work in any kind of English class, we teach it because we believe that it has certain broad values. We teach a novel, poem, or play, for example, because we value its profundity of thought, its depth of emotion, and its beauty of language. When we teach a novel, poem, short story, or play in an English as a Second Language class, we believe in those same values. Indeed, there is no reason to change them. However, when we teach an ESL class, there is yet an additional value that we can place on novels or short stories: they can provide models of English deterministic word order that ESL students can imitate in order to learn to write their own English sentences. (These ESL students are in the next to the lowest level in the ESL program at Pasadena City College; they are about one and a half to two years away from English 1A.)

Linguistic Basis

There is one overriding linguistic reason for teaching English word order to ESL students: English is a word-order language. In *The Development of Modern English* (1954), Stuart Robertson emphatically points out the predominant power of word order to carry meaning in an English sentence:

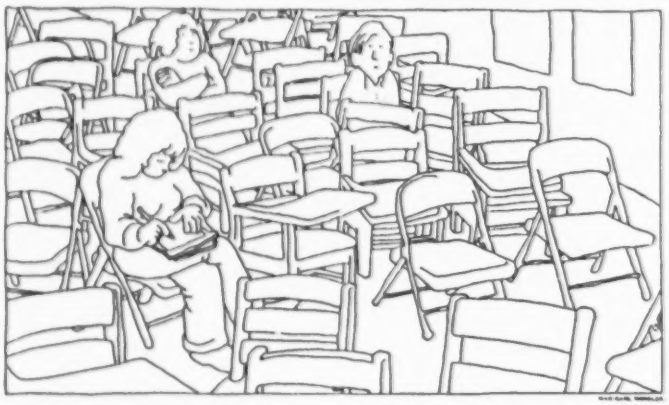
> If reduction in the use of inflection has done much to alter the basic structure of English, the concomitant "fixing" of word order has completed the change. For it is no exaggeration to say that though inflection dominated word order in Old English, today word order dominates inflection. So powerful has it become, indeed, that some features of Modern English syntax have actually been remade under its pressure. (285)

Later, Robertson again emphasizes the unassailable predominance of word order in English, saying that "even though pronouns have different forms for subject and object, they dare not violate the established patterns of word order" (286).

If English has established word-order patterns, clearly we should teach those patterns to our ESL students. I have chosen six word-order units that are staples of English syntax. Arranged loosely in a simple to a more complicated order, these units are the following:

1. Coordinate verbs. By "coordinated verbs" I mean a sentence with one subject followed by two or more verbs. for instance, in E.B. White's *Charlotte's Web*, the narrator says: "She got in the car and drove to his office in the village." "Got" and "drove" are the coordinate verbs.
2. Independent clauses connected by coordinate conjunctions.
3. Independent clauses connected by conjunctive adverbs.
4. Participial phrases.
5. Clauses connected by *when, although, if,* and so on.
6. Clauses connected by *who, that, which, where, whose.*
7. Combinations of those word-order units.

These word-order units not only are staples of written English, they also have deterministic word-order patterns that ESL students quickly learn. By deterministic I simply mean that if a writer begins an English sentence with "when," or any other subordinate conjunction, he is compelled to follow it with a subject, a verb, then another subject and another verb. Students very quickly see this "When+subject+verb, +subject+verb" word order. The same determinism happens with "-ing" when it is used as a participle. If a writer begins his sentence with "-ing," he is compelled to follow it, at some point in this sentence, with a subject and a verb. ESL students quickly learn that pattern, too. All six of those word-order units have clear, understandable deterministic word-order patterns.



Having decided to teach those six word-order units, I look for novels and short stories that display them in clear and straightforward sentences. If the ESL students are beginners, for example, I get excited about E.B. White's *Charlotte's Web* or *The Trumpet of the Swan*. Those two novels are rich in coordinated verbs and, therefore, appropriate for beginners. If the students are a little beyond the beginning stage, then I like to start the semester with Steinbeck's *The Pearl* or perhaps Garcia Marquez's *The Story of a Ship-wrecked Sailor*, both of which use coordinated verbs and the other word-order units as well. During the semester, I use other novels and stories—*Of Mice and Men*, Marquez's "One of These Days" and "Balthazar's Marvelous Afternoon," London's short story "War," selections from Amy Tan's *The Joy Luck Club*, one or two of Ray Bradbury's stories, Hart and Kaufman's *You Can't Take It With You*, and others.

Classroom Procedure

In general, I base my classroom procedure on the old idea that imitation is probably the greatest teacher. Let me use *Charlotte's Web* to illustrate this process. For two or three class hours, or for as long as it takes, students learn everything they can about Chapter One. We read passages aloud, so names of characters become second nature; we explore denotations and connotations, dramatize scenes, clarify the sequence of events, and discuss the emotional lives of characters—in short, the class gets under control the paraphrasable content of Chapter One.

When I think that the class has gained a high degree of control over Chapter One, I start the specific lessons on deterministic word order. Broadly, I use what might be called "guided induction." It is inductive because the ESL student studies a word-order unit in Chapter One, gradually infers the syntactical pattern, and eventually understands the deterministic movement of that pattern. It is guided because I select the sentences that they study and subsequently control the inferences they make and the conclusions that they draw.

Here is the step-by-step procedure. First, I copy on a ditto about seven or eight sentences, all using the coordinated verb pattern, from the first chapter of *Charlotte's Web*. The ditto looks like this:

1. Fern pushed a chair out of the way and ran outdoors.
2. She took hold of the ax and tried to pull it out of her father's hand.
3. He walked to the sink and washed his hands.
4. Then she opened the lid again, lifted the pig out, and held it against her cheek.
5. The children ran out to the road and climbed into the bus.
6. She just sat and stared out of the window.
7. The pig had a good appetite and caught on quickly.

Next, for about ten minutes in class we read the sentences aloud, and I call emphatic, enthusiastic attention to the presence of the one subject and coordinated verbs. On the board I write in big letters: S V and V. They immediately see the word-order pattern. Then I call attention to the "and's" deterministic power to join two verbs as equals. Then I lead a drill: I supply the subject, the first verb, and the "and"; they supply the second verb. I say, "Chang looked up into the sky and. . . " and they, I hope, shout back "waved his arms." Whatever they say, I write on the board until we have eight or nine sentences up there.

Then we move from oral to written imitation. They write three or four sentences of their own using coordinated verbs, and while they write, I walk from desk to desk making corrections. So that they go a long way toward assimilating this pattern, for homework I have them write four or five sentences using coordinated verbs. To make sure they have imitated this pattern correctly, at the start of the next class I ask several students to write one of their homework sentences on the board. We go over them, checking the verb pattern and clarifying any other situations that come up—the meanings of words, punctuation, and verb tenses, for example.

Teaching the ESL students to write sentences with coordinated verbs moves along fairly smoothly because it is a simple word order to learn, but later in the semester teaching them to use the other components requires a deliberate, careful pace because the word order and the meaning vary considerably. Such care is required, for example, when teaching the subordinate conjunctions.

There is, first of all, the placement of the conjunction in the sentence. From Marquez's *The Story of a Ship-wrecked Sailor*, I copy sentences that place the subordinate conjunction at the beginning of the sentence:

1. When I saw Ramon Herrera, I began to paddle furiously.
2. When I came down again, Julio Amador had vanished.
3. When I looked at my watch on the life raft, it was exactly noon.
4. Although the wound burned a little, it had stopped bleeding.
5. If the radio operator had contacted Cartagena, he would have relayed the exact position of the accident.

Again, we study the sentences and figure out the deterministic word-order pattern (sc s v, S V). I drill the pattern orally; they practice writing sentences using that word order in class; I correct them; they write more sentences as homework; and we correct them on the board the next day.

A few days later, after they have assimilated the word order that places the subordinate clause at the beginning of the sentence, we start to work on the subordinate clause that ends the sentence.

1. I went on searching the horizon, until the breeze stopped.
2. I felt as though the water had penetrated to my bones.
3. That idea had hardly ripened when I saw a speck on the horizon.
4. I was beginning to feel uneasy although I hadn't given up hope.
5. I would try to row toward them when I saw them.

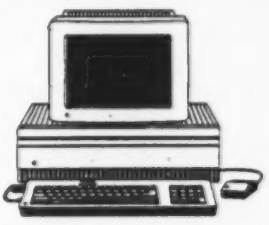
Once the class can write a sentence beginning with a subordinate conjunction and also one ending with a clause introduced by a subordinate conjunction, we go to work on the subordinate conjunction that immediately follows the subject. Once again I hand out a ditto of the author's sentences that guides the student to infer the word order. For example:

1. Luis, when he got to Cartagena, decided to write Mary.
2. The sailor, as he lay awake in his bunk, realized that none of the sail-

(ESL, Continued on Page 18)

THE NEW TECHNOPROPISMS

The Blessing and the Plague of Spell-Check



by HELEN HEIGHTSMAN GORDON
Bakersfield College

Misused words are nothing new. They were a recognized source of humor long before Sheridan created his dramatic character Mrs. Malaprop, whose name added the word *malapropism* to the English language.

But word processors and spelling checkers are adding new kinds of malapropisms to the language: *technopropisms*. Technopropisms are the perfectly spelled but flagrantly misused words that startle us from the pages of papers written by students who have mastered the commands of the computer but not the demands of their native tongue.

Here are a few examples from student papers written in our new writing lab at Bakersfield College:

- I hope my incites are correct.
- In both tennis and baseball you need good coronation.
- We should care enough about our earth to take percussions to preserve it.
- We are using our resources to make manor factored goods.
- The audience is tolled of the outcome.
- Children need both parents, not a signal parent.
- Some children are left at home to fin for themselves.
- Years ago, a wife would spend pain staking hours at the grocery store selecting food for the family.
- The husband was expected to provide a study income.
- Birth control pills can make the minstrel process easier.
- You can regain your independence while keeping your self esteem in tack.
- Sometimes an innocent by standard gets hurt.
- He found that the valley was baron, and he dug a well for water.
- Martin Luther King dreamed that one day all God's children, black men and white men, protestants and Catholics, Jews and genitals would all hold hands.

As if these isolated sentences were not enough evidence that we have a problem, some students multiply their errors throughout a tangle of sentences that require some mind-reading to interpret.

From an original fable: The shinning sun was a welcome part of the begging of each day. The forest was defiantly a beautiful place. The king summoned all his knights and worriers. After the battle, the king had nothing left but his thrown.

From a business major: The manager takes a reading on the registers to see how much money should be in each register tilt. If you are picketing money, you will be fired.

From a dyslexic who was trying hard: The zoo and the circus both perform for audiences in some form or another. The zoo has a variety of animals, from a common squirrel to a rare panda bear and even a bold eagle. While the zoo helps to relax people, the circus tins to exit people.

In the interest of brevity, I have not quoted in context some of the more common errors—*form* for *from*, *that* for *than*, *sense* for *since*, *dominate* for *dominant*, *on* for *no*, *well* for *will*, *except* for *accept* and also for *expect*. But I suspect the distinctions between these words may eventually become as blurred as the distinction between *who* and *whom*. Perhaps our teaching will change, too, as we become inundated with the imprecise language of students who have grown up in a milieu of filmed images rather than printed words. Many students today read only what they must and cannot recognize misused words even if they proofread. In combination with their unflagging trust in technology, this educational impoverishment will generate increasing numbers of technopropisms.

While I am not one to bemoan all changes in society, and while I am one who values the convenience of word processors, I can't help pondering the effects that spelling checkers might have had upon great works of literature in the past. For example, if Thomas Jefferson had had a spelling checker and an airhead for a secretary, would we have seen something like this from his word processor?

> We hold these troughs to be sell fever dent: that all men are catered equal, that they are endured by their crater with curtain ineligible rites—that among these our life, livery, and the purse suit of happiness.

Or suppose Shakespeare had been plagued with a word processor. Would Hamlet have uttered these memorable words?

> To be or not to bee, that is the quest. Weather tis no blur in the mind to sulfur the slinks and errors of outrages fortune, or to take arms antagonist a sea of trebles and buy opposing end them. To dye, to slip, purchase to dream—eye, theirs the rub! For in that sleek of depth what drums may come when we have shoveled off this mortal cool must give us paws.

Or suppose Abraham Lincoln had been so disadvantaged as to have a lap-top computer with him on the train to Gettysburg? Would posterity have preserved something like the following?

> Fore scour and seven years ago are feathers brought fourth upon this containment a new nation con sleeved in liberty and desecrated to the proscription than all men are crated equal. New we are engorged in a grate swivel war testing weather that nation or any nation so corn sheaved and so dead carted can long injure. We are met today on a greet bottle filled of that ware. We have come to desiccate a potion of that feel as a finial wrestling place for those that bear gave there livers that than nation mite live. It is alto gather fiddling and prosper that we should do this. But, in a larder since, we cannot desecrate, we cannot confiscate, we cannot hollow this ground. The brave men, living and dud, who straggled here have concentrated it far above are pour power to add or detract.

But enough! I do not wish to belabor the point. I just want to warn those teachers who anticipate, as I once did, greater ease reading student papers that are neatly typed on word processors and edited with spelling checkers. We may become somewhat liberated from having to mark "sp" on student papers, but maybe Hercules felt a similar pleasant expectation when he lopped off the first head of the Hydra monster.

Helen Gordon has taught English composition and literature for the Kern Community College District for over twenty-three years, seven of them at Porterville College and over sixteen years at Bakersfield College. She is presently serving as area representative for ECCTYC's Region V. In addition, Professor Gordon does freelance writing and has five textbooks now in print through Holt, Wadsworth, and St. Martin's Press.

COMPUTERS

(Continued from Page 5)

students' compositions improved faster, more accurately, and with much more creativity than in the old, conventionally situated "paper classroom."

The new wave of the future is the computerized classroom. Not only is it less expensive (the paper reduction alone saves a multitude of life-sustaining trees), but it is also seen as the bedrock for future innovations (Novell Network can be linked up with libraries to provide instant access for student research). In fact, I recently viewed a documentary about Oberlin College in Ohio where each student is given a computer when s/he enters her/his freshman year, and s/he is able to keep *four years of lessons/compositions* on a 3.5 inch disk! This makes my K-402 class look like Alley-Oop and his cave dwellers.

So, what are the negatives, Mister Musgrave? Well, it is chilly in this room (computers have to be kept cool for technical safety), and you do need a technician nearby who is competent to solve the mechanical and other problems that will arise. And there is always the problem of legality: you really cannot *force* a student to compose on the computer. But these are the only drawbacks that I can see.

The plus-side to using the computerized classroom is astronomical: I can run complete remedial, freshman, and advanced writing composition courses without *once* taking home those piles of smudged, coffee-spattered, hideously clasped-together manuscripts. I can let the busy student work at his or her own pace and show up at the laboratory when it is convenient for him or her (this converts my classes into valuable conferencing sessions where the student is given one-to-one tutoring). It is sad to say, but many of my colleagues are *still* standing up there and spewing hot air to a restless and disinterested throng of zombie-students-as-empty-vessels-of-ignorance-thank-you-Pedagogy-of-the-Oppressed. My computerized classroom, on the other hand, allows the teacher to "get down into the writing trenches" with his or her students.

Now I will hop up on my soapbox and wave the American flag for the grand finale. Students are why I am getting that paycheck every month. They are not there because I have all the answers to pour into their empty brains. They are there because I have been writing a bit longer than they have, and they need some one-on-one guidance. Therefore, computerized classrooms, I submit, *will* be the wave of the future. It will be a gigantic wave (I hope) that will sweep away all those pedagogical con artists who take up students' time with their "pet theories of literary amusettes" and do *not* get down to the business of teaching writing. If the teacher does not use this technology to its fullest ability to assist the student, then it will remain a toy for egotistical, literary dilettantes, who could not care less about our country's progress into the twenty-first century. Adminstrators and department heads: get off your backsides and learn the "cutting edge" of technology for the students' benefit or stop classifying yourselves as "educators"! I'll have another slice of your apple pie now, mom, thank you.

James Musgrave presently teaches at Mesa and Grossmont Colleges in San Diego, and has his degree in English from San Diego State. He is writing a doctoral textbook that combines computer technology with creative writing "prompts" to give teachers across the curriculum the chance to get more writing enthusiasm and accuracy from their students.

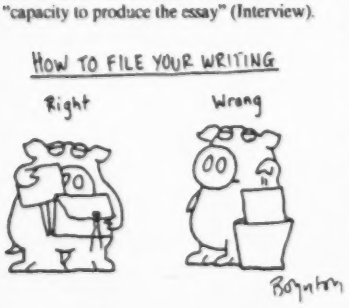
ASKING FOR ARTIFACTS

The Benefits of In-Class Essay Writing and Holistic Scoring

by LENNY BAILEY
Butte College and CSU, Chico

Each semester in my freshman composition courses I have my students write four or five impromptu essays on issues of a socio-political nature, which I score holistically on a six-point scale. Although an impromptu essay is a first draft, an inchoate product that can be improved with revision, such writing has an important place in my composition classes for a number of reasons. First of all, I'm provided with samples of my students' raw sentence-making ability and intuitive writing choices, artifacts which help me know them better as writers. While I don't use in-class writing specifically to counteract the grade inflation that can occur with multiple-draft papers, I am able to achieve a more balanced overall assessment of students' work by comparing impromptu essay scores with grades on revised papers. I've discovered also that students, in writing on a common topic, can become better readers of their own and others' writing when they evaluate a range of sample papers for that topic, since key elements of good formal writing (e.g., focus, organization, specifics) apply to in-class essays just as they do to multiple-draft papers. And I'm convinced that the holistic scoring of impromptu essays sharpens an instructor's process of responding to and evaluating student writing.

I realize that many composition instructors use in-class writing, often early in the semester, for diagnostic rather than grading purposes, a type of reading Erika Lindeman describes as "essentially a private response to the paper. We're discussing it with ourselves, explaining its patterns of features and planning a course of instruction for the student" (221). Although some component of diagnostic reading is present in my use of in-class writing, my primary purpose is to measure the ability demonstrated in that specific performance, while bearing in mind that it is but one representation of a student's overall writing ability. Lois Bueler, former coordinator of CSU, Chico's composition program, calls an impromptu essay assignment a request for "the creation of an artifact," and what we then evaluate is the student's "capacity to produce the essay" (Interview).

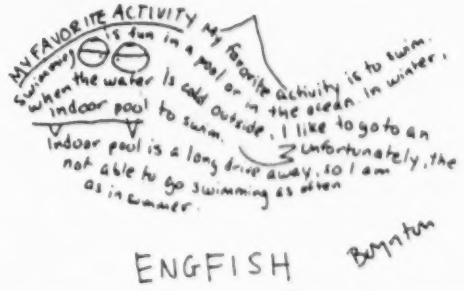


IN-CLASS WRITING STRATEGIES

Early in the semester I make it clear to my students that the most important writing they will do in the course will be the longer papers involving inventing, drafting, and revising. Nonetheless, impromptu essay writing is a reality of college life: students take placement tests before entering an English class, write essay exams in various subjects, and probably will face a writing competency test when they transfer to a university to qualify for course work in their majors, particularly within the CSU system.

Central to any discussion of in-class writing is the importance of the essay topic itself, which must be chosen carefully and with a clear purpose. Students simply will not write as well as they are able if faced with vague or overly complex topics, or ones that are "ill-suited to their age, capacity, (and) background" (White 100). I have collected many of my topics from previous Department Essay questions at CSU, Chico, an impromptu fifty-minute essay administered each semester to all the freshman composition students, which is scored holistically by the freshman composition faculty. Thus, in choosing these topics for use in subsequent classes, I know first-hand as a scorer how students, mine included, have performed on them. Presently, of the five in-class questions I might use in a semester, three (mandatory national service, censorship of rock music, and the environment) are previous Department Essay questions, while two are of my own devising (the prompt are the directions for writing with a focusing question that asks students to take a stand and generate an essay on the given issue.

Even with a carefully chosen topic, students face a challenging task in producing a coherent essay in fifty minutes. Quickly, they must figure out the full implications of the question, comprehend the rhetorical mode the topic calls for, and plan a response to fit the limited time span (White 101). Because of this difficult writing agenda, and because my goal is not so much to test students as to help them gain confidence with writing essays under pressure, I first introduce them to the demands of impromptu essay writing through a shortened practice question similar to their


MY FAVORITE ACTIVITY
My favorite activity is to swim.
(swimming) is fun in a pool or in the ocean in winter,
when the water is cold outside. I like to go to an
indoor pool to swim.
Indoor pool is a long drive away, so I am
not able to go swimming as often
as in summer.
Unfortunately, the
ENGFISH
Boynton

(IN-CLASS ESSAYS, Continued on Page 16)

homeless and grades in college). In format, these questions involve a prompt that presents an opinion or opposing viewpoints or informative data on an issue, and is used mainly to stimulate thinking on the topic. Below the

SWEATHOGS

(Continued from Page 12)

time management combined with demanding excellence (and accepting nothing less) seems to work. When a former student stopped by to visit, a student asked if I had nagged his class as I did them, and he replied, "Yes, all the time, but I'm getting 'Bs' this semester." And with obvious pride, he showed them his notebook, organized by class with a bright green semester schedule at the front.

We do not need to make allowances for our sweathogs nor do we need to feel sorry for them. Our exit standards should remain high; however, we must teach to who our students are, to what their needs are. And they need more: more work, more drill on the basics, more reading in and out of class, more attention; we need to expect more of them, not less. We need to teach to the total student. Sweathogs need so much and often end up with so little.

None of these ideas is new; we all know that this kind of teaching is the way to make learning happen—not just for sweathogs, but all students—but how can we give our students this kind of attention with four to five classes of twenty-five to thirty students?

Getting tired of facing another semester that would end with knowing I could have, should have, done more, I decided to put into practice the theories I'd been forming over the years. I began with a basic writing class at San Jose City College, where I'd been teaching for several semesters and had a fairly good understanding of the students. Not all of the students who enroll in urban junior colleges are sweathogs, but many are, particularly in the remediation classes where students are placed because of their low basic skills test scores.

I didn't change what I taught but how I taught it. My agenda was to develop both cognitive and affective skills, specifically, to lower attrition, to increase basic skills, and to develop a positive attitude toward school so that the students would see themselves as learners and continue the process. I did everything above and more.

When Renaldo was arrested and would be in jail rather than in class the day of an important midterm, I made arrangements for him to take the exam in jail. When Annie announced she had to drop out because she

couldn't find a babysitter, I told her she could bring her baby to class, and he could play quietly in the back of the room while we worked. When Victor's financial aid was messed up, I lent him the money he needed to buy books. When I noticed Margaret squinting at the board, I put her in contact with the Lion's Club so she could get the glasses she so desperately needed. When Tran was depressed because his verb-tense problems were obscuring his content, I arranged for Kelly to tutor him after class.

I worked very hard to establish a community of learners, from providing class phone number lists to arranging peer tutoring. I held early morning study sessions on the days before important exams. I found reasons to award and praise literally every student; all got their Warhol fifteen minutes in the spotlight. I brought doughnuts on days when we did prewriting workshops. I made a point to have lunch or dinner with each student.

I don't have any more time than anyone else. I have a family and a social life. But for fifteen weeks, I organized my life around what my sweathogs needed. For the first time, I'm ending the semester knowing I did everything I could. I feel both successful and saddened.

The semester was a success at several levels. The students who are left are all doing passing work and all plan to continue next term, and I do believe that they've set their sights a little higher, expect a little more from themselves because they know they can do it. But the semester was also unsuccessful. Of the nineteen students who had originally enrolled in the class, only twelve remain. Despite everything, Henry dropped out, saying, "Hey, it's not your fault. I'm just lazy." Despite everything, Marie dropped out because "I just can't do it. I just can't take care of a kid and work and go to school." Despite everything, Alan dropped out because "I've got business I gotta do. I'm not the school-type anyway."

Sometimes it feels like a battle: school against life. But school has to win. It's the only chance a sweathog's got. Sweathogs can change their minds and can find school as a world of discovery, the world of the mind . . . a place where they can belong and where they want to stay.

What is a sweathog?

A sweathog grows up slowly, goes to college, finishes graduate school. A sweathog teaches English.

Dolores laGuardia is currently part of the California corps of freeway faculty; she teaches developmental studies (writing and reading) at San Jose City College, English 1A and 1B at San Jose State, and humanities at the University of San Francisco. The preceding essay began as a letter to her developmental writing students and grew into a larger definition of what a "sweathog" is and what a sweathog can become.

IN-CLASS ESSAYS

(Continued from Page 15)

first real one. For example, before my students write on mandatory national service, they read an article in class on the Supreme Court's 1989 ruling on flag burning; then I ask them to write for half the class period or so in response to the question, "Should people have the right to burn or desecrate the American flag?" By encouraging a focus on constitutional rights, this question finds common ground with the topic on mandatory national service.

For further sharpening practice, I immediately follow up on the students' response to the practice question by giving them substantial excerpts from opinions on flag burning by Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens (con) and journalist Richard N. Goodwin (pro). I have the class evaluate in writing each opinion, with the aim of reinforcing strategies of effective argument. Since flag burning is an emotional issue, we usually have a vigorous discussion about it after the students have written their responses.

When an in-class essay is written, the particular writing task may be finished, but the issue itself and the potential for alternate viewpoints and discussion of it are not. In fact, the essay assignment seems to open a channel for discussion. Thus, after my students have written their own and discussed sample in-class essays on mandatory national service, censorship of rock music, and the homeless, I give them an article on the subject, which we read and discuss.

HOLISTIC SCORING WITH STUDENTS

On the day I return my students' in-class essays, I distribute three sample essays (on the same topic from previous semesters) that show a range of scores. I review the essay question with the students, read the three sample essays with them, and ask them to rank the essays, using the six-point scale, and to justify their scores in writing. Writing their reasons leads to more substantial evaluative thinking and to a more focused discussion.

To prepare the students' to rank the papers, I outline on the board the following criteria for evaluation, emphasizing that these elements are not isolated parts but work interdependently in an essay:

1) Does the essay focus on the full issue?
2) Does the essay develop ideas and use specific support?
3) Is the essay well-organized?
4) Is language used effectively and appropriately?

After the students have ranked the sample essays, I tabulate their choices on the board, and we talk about the papers. In this exercise the students become evaluators, following the criteria I use to score their essays, as they holistically score these papers. Our discussion of the papers helps them better discern the elements of effective writing.

HOLISTIC SCORING WITH COLLEAGUES

To evaluate an essay holistically we read it as a whole, forming an overall impression rather than analyzing and deliberating over its constituent parts. In reading holistically we give priority to the communicative act of a text rather than to prejudiced notions of correct form or mechanics. The goal of good holistic reading is to internalize the criteria so that the scoring proceeds quickly and impressionistically, although holistic raters in a controlled reading session usually follow some sort of scoring guide or rubric that outlines the criteria for ascribing individual scores. The formulation of the rubric, which develops consensus among the instructors on the elements of good writing that apply to the papers at hand, promotes debate and discussion about what constitutes good writing in general and, thus, opens up important dialogue among colleagues.

In a recent *inside english* article, Mike Guista offers what I see as a suggestion that instructors can benefit from practice in holistic scoring when he says that English teachers "spend an incredible amount of time practicing the judgment of writing. Our judgments as a group are very important (of course, our abilties to judge perceptively vary considerably from person to person within our group)" (7).

The best way to gain expertise in holistic scoring is by participating in a controlled reading session of a common essay administered to all or most of the sections of a particular course, and this can apply as readily to basic writing as freshmen composition. This past December the English Deparment at my community college, based upon group consensus, held its first holistic scoring session of a common impromptu essay written by approximately twenty sessions of English 119, our basic writing course just below freshman composition. About eighteen instructors, most of whom had no previous experience with holistic scoring, rated the essays on a six-point scale. Our chief reader had devised the topic, and I served as table leader, checking scoring consistency among the readers. A primary goal for the reading was to have our students see how two instructors besides their own teacher evaluated the writing. Also, there was interest to learn how English 119 students ranked among each other on a comparative scale. (For a comprehensive discussion of holistic scoring guides and methods for organizing a holistic reading session, see chapters 7 and 8 of White's *Teaching and Assessing Writing*, a book I find to be the best available introduction to the principles and methods of holistic scoring.)

I came away with enthusiasm from our common essay reading, feeling that it had been productive and valuable, and, through conversations with participants, I learned that many of them felt the same way. Since many of the instructors had not previously met, the session introduced them to one another in the context of employing one of their fundamental professional skills: evaluation of writing. In a holistic reading, English instructors move out of their largely unchecked dominion over grading in their individual classrooms and into a monitored community of evaluators working toward a common purpose; thus, one is implicitly pushed to take stock of one's own process and criteria for evaluating writing, comparing these with those of colleagues. I personally find this very enriching. Though an essential measure of agreement is necessary to achieve reliability in the scoring, the goal of a holistic reading session is not to coerce readers into rigid agreement but to achieve cooperative standards for evaluation.

In a recent article on holistic scoring, Brian Huot questions whether this need for rater agreement could "reduce their powers of perception" and interfere with "the ability of a reader to actually see all of a student essay and not just those parts which have relevance to the scoring guideline" being used. (210). From my experience as a holistic rater, I see the converse to be true. For all the holistic reading sessions in which I have participated, there has not been a formal scoring guide on hand as raters read essays; rather, the aim has been to construct evaluative criteria, as a general frame of mind, through discussion of the "anchor" papers (sample essays chosen from the group writing on the question that illustrate the six-point scale). This method, in focusing readers on the characteristics of the essays at hand rather than on an abstract, preformulated set of criteria, allows for rich, individual readings of papers. When scores on a given essay differ by more than one point, a review is sometimes necessary to determine a rater's reasons for a score; yet this review is not an interrogation but a conversation between reader and table leader "that is the heart of holistic scoring" (Bueler, Interview), where a reader explains the reasoning for the score, with the knowledge that s/he does not have to change it.

I found this kind of conversation particularly rewarding in our common essay reading. When I asked individual readers to reread a particular paper they had scored, or when readers asked me to check specific papers they were unsure of, I aimed for dialogue rather than confrontation, and I came away from these encounters with increased respect for the evaluative integrity of my colleagues. This spirit of dialogue carried over into the lunch room after we finished scoring. I sat at a table with four other instructors, three of whom I had not met prior to that day, as we discussed aspects of the scoring session. The conversation soon channeled into our own classroom teaching, as we discussed how we assigned and evaluated assignments, how many revisions we allowed, even how we taught punctuation. Prompted by the evaluative work we had just finished, this was a true round-table exchange, where everyone contributed and responded to ideas.

If one cannot participate in a holistic reading session, the next best thing is to exchange papers with a colleague, rate these without knowledge of the other's scores, and then meet to compare the scoring. I recently did this with a colleague who wanted extra practice with holistic reading. I made copies of about a dozen essays written in one of my freshman composition sections and gave these to her several days prior to our scheduled meeting. Upon getting together, we took turns reading the papers aloud and discussed reasons for our scores. Through this review and debate (disagreements sharpened our focus) we made adjustments and eventually reached agreement on the scoring. Both of us found this to be a very productive meeting, and our discussion often spilled over into what constitutes tutes good writing and into our classroom practices. Even though we used a six-point scale for ranking of the papers, this probably could be done with letter grades *if* evaluative criteria were adjusted to the demands of impromptu writing.

Although holistic scores do not represent absolute values but rather comparative rankings based on criteria applied to the specific group writing on a given question, I translate scores into letter grades because the essays count for one fifth of the course grade and because students ask for such an equivalence. Alert to White's reminder that "Every time we give an important grade for first-draft writing, we deny in practice what we say about revision" (243), I would certainly not weight in-class essays (no matter how many) more than 20 percent of the semester grade. Roughly speaking, I translate a "3" essay into a C, a "4" into a B, and a "5" into an A-; I figure a "2" as a D and, in my experience as a holistic reader, a "6"is rare enough to be considered an A+.

An ongoing controversy over holistic scoring of impromptu essays is whether this procedure is a valid measurement of student writing ability. It is important to remember that one score on one impromptu essay topic is not the definitive assessment of a student's

writing ability; nor would two such essay scores be. However, I feel that three or four or five impromptu essay scores can give us an idea of the student's natural writing ability and essay-making ability. Interestingly, the scores my students receive on impromptu essays usually approximate the grades they receive on their multiple-draft papers, though there are always instructive cases when this is not true, cases which underscore the primacy of revision.

(IN-CLASS ESSAYS, Continued on Page 18)

WILD WORD SOCCER

Child's Play for Serious Learning

by MADELINE LOEWE PUCCIONI
Diablo Valley College/Solano College

"Blue," I chalk on the board. "Green." A line below, a line between. A T-shaped scoring grid, colors on top, left and right. Latecomers take their seats, eyes front. "CEREMENT," I print.

Brian, on the GREEN side, raises his hand. "CONCRETE?" he asks.

"Cerement? Concrete? Funny, Brian. Half a point for funny." I chalk up half a point for the GREENS.

"Ritual? Like in ceremony?" (Janelle, a BLUE).

"Close, but no banana. Act I, Scene iv. It's in your footnotes. Let's see who's looked it up," I say.

"Ohhh," groans Ana Paula, one of my over-achievers. ("*Cerement*" is probably the only word she hasn't looked up.)

"Okay, who has a dictionary? How many have dictionaries? Hold them up." Six on the GREENS, four on the BLUES. I chalk up one point per dictionary. "All right, flip time."

David finds it first. "Waxed shroud. Derivation: Greek keros, Latin ceri, wax."

"Yup. Good."

"You forgot our point."

"Sorry, David." One point, BLUE. "Did anybody find it in the footnotes?"

"Cerement: a waxed shroud used for the illustrious dead." John Clarke arrives, hoists his backpack into the seat behind him. No doubt his clunker—same year, same model as mine—has failed to start again.

"Good, John. Okay, now for five points. Act I, scene iv. What character uses the word 'cerement,' and to whom does he say it? Page number and footnote?"

A long pause. Solemn flipping of pages. A hand up, waving. "Ana Paula?"

"Hamlet to the Ghost, Act I, scene iv, page 893, line 48. '. . . but tell why thy canonized bones, hearsed in death, have burst their cerements . . . .'"

"Five points GREEN."

"Awright, Ana Paula!" the GREENS cheer.

"Okay. Now this is a ten-pointer. Does Hamlet trust the ghost, at this point? Does he believe him?" Silence. A few coughs. "Ten big ones. Give it a try."

"Well, yes and no." Mark, my hulk in the back row.

"Okay. Good. Why do you say that? EVIDENCE, Mr. Pingree?"

"He says, in line 40, 'Bring with thee airs from heaven or blasts from Hell/Be thy intents wicked or charitable . . . thou comest in such questionable shape I'll speak with thee.' He wants to check it out. It looks like his father, but it could be, like, a demon. He doesn't know yet."

"Bingo. Ten points."

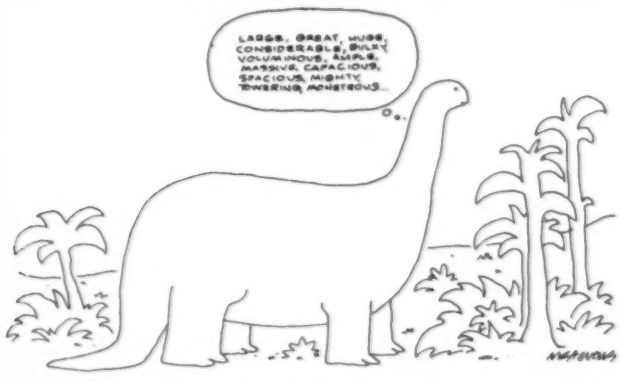
"Awright!" his BLUE teammates cheer as I chalk up the ten points.

"In what other ways does Hamlet 'check out' the ghost?" . . . .

Junior High? High School? No, English 123, Diablo Valley College, an English 2-level course. Most of the students are in their early twenties, though there are several in their thirties. The above is a fairly accurate recollection of a recent class, which began, as usual, with a game of what I still call "Wild Word Soccer."

Wild Word Soccer originated three years ago in a recalcitrant Freshman Composition (122) class. We were reading Paul Theroux's "Soccer in San Salvador." As I approached the classroom, the October sun shone brightly on the seven or eight hackeysack adepts in the class. I watched admiringly as they tossed the leather ball with impossible skill from head to knee to insole and back again. Several of these young men were on the DVC soccer team, I knew. One had just been accepted on an international team and would tour Europe that summer. It was easy to see why. Cheery hellos greeted my admiring wave as they scrambled for their seats in the classroom.

Once inside, however, they eyed my usual stack of reading quizzes glumly. Inspired, perhaps, by the title of the day's essay and the row of colorful soccer shirts in front of me, I divided the class in half with the wave of a hand, chalked up my first BLUE/GREEN "T" grid, and, using the vocabulary words and reading questions on the quiz, launched into my first WWS game.



ROGET'S BRONTOSAURUS

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No one was more amazed at the results than I. Students who hadn't spoken up for weeks raised their hands and attempted vocabulary definitions. The students on either side of the room suddenly became "Teams." They joked and cheered their "teammates" on as we went through the list of vocabulary words. Somehow I had stumbled upon a game that allowed them to respond in class without losing face. (Yes, the high school prescriptions against "losing your cool" by participating in class still apply in Freshman Comp.) Best of all, my students were having fun competing with each other, shouting out responses like kids in a schoolbus. I was hearing a sustained, sustain*able* outpouring of what Elbow calls the "real voice": "When we were little, we had no difficulty sounding the way we felt; thus, most little children speak and write with real voice" (306). Gone were the awkward, controlled attempts to phrase an acceptable answer; in their place were spontaneous, risky child-like responses, a kind of *oral* classroom "brainstorming" that valued the attempt as much as the answer, the risk as much as the result.

Edward Hall's "Arab World," our next reading, provided my first opportunity for an organized approach to the game. I told them there'd be a "blistering" WWS game revolving around the somewhat specialized vocabulary of that excellent essay, and five and ten point questions on content and theme. (Define "proxemics." Look in the headnotes . . . okay, okay. Define "*headnotes*.")

I found that it was an easy leap from vocabulary to questions about content and theme: What are "cultural perceptions"? How does the author first discover that the Arab sense of private space is much different from the Western? What is the author's purpose in "The Arab World"? Why do you think he felt *compelled* to write this essay?

I now try to select words not only for their difficulty, but also for their "can-opener" qualities, their textual significance. Recently we examined the word "range" in Whitman's "When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer." I blush to admit that I was not above humming "Home on the Range" to suggest how that one word juxtaposes the opposites *wandering* and *vastness* with *arranging* and *rows*. WWS vocabulary work helps emphasize the importance of the word and its levels of meaning, helps students stop and consider why an author has chosen that word and no other, while it demands that they familiarize themselves with that most useful of handbooks, the dictionary. I give WWS points for definition and spelling, as a rule, one point for each.

At first, I kept score erratically, using hatchmarks and the occasional "+ 10" for a question on content. Rarely would I total up the points at the end of the game. But students began to demand an accurate reckoning, and woe was me if I forgot a well-deserved point! I now employ a student to keep score but must alternate from one "side" to the other each class meeting to allay suspicion.

An unexpected bonus of the WWS game is that students can run the show quite well themselves, thank you, using vocabulary lists to quiz their colleagues. I often start a class

(SOCCER, Continued on Page 19)

TONY & LARITA

You wait for me after class because
it is late and I once said I am afraid of
the janitors with their angry brooms,
frantic mops, aching to be let loose
at the hour our class exits.

You are a bit shy at your kindness,
thinking it intrusive when I smile
when we wait together for the elevator
in the quiet, polished halls echoing
our few words. And we giggle a little
when we get on and begin to talk,
realizing no one has pushed the button
for us to descend from our airy heights:
We have studied grammar all evening
with intensity and now practice our
conversation in civilized tones free
of the streets that wait to take us
to our separate destinations. In turn
you each tell me how hard it is to be
different, what work it is to keep
the past out of your future without
denying the places you have come from,
proud of who you are, what you are doing,
and where you want to go. How the beauty
of
your ambition surrounds me, heals me, makes
me believe again that what I do is
important. Outside the cold buildings
silently loom above us, working people
waiting for the last busses home,
and we pause a moment, a bit embarrassed
by the sudden onlookers at our pleasure.
The beautiful darkness of your skin is a
special hope to me, almost inexplicable. If
you can forgive the world, love the white
teacher as you do, and I you, what might
we
all become, if we continue, what might be
saved? A few pale city stars flicker their
way towards us just as we part and, waving,
I make my way lit by the ridiculous neons
in the darkness pressing around us:
Jack in the Box, Hot Spot, Depot Shangrila,
A Little Bit of Heaven Lounge.

LEONARD SANAZARO
City College of San Francisco
University of San Francisco

Leonard Sanazaro teaches expository and creative writing part-time at the University of San Francisco and City College of San Francisco. His poems have appeared in Colorado North Review, Denver Quarterly, *and* Berkeley Poetry Review. *Mr. Sanazaro's poetry will soon appear in* The Seattle Review *and in* Zebra, A Journal of Literature and Opinion.

ESL CLASSROOM

(Continued from Page 13)

ors had been able to get to sleep.

3. Luis, before he had time to decide, found himself swimming toward the raft.
4. The gash on his knee, although it burned a little, had stopped bleeding.
5. His mates, because they were happy to be back, would be spreading out all over the city.
6. The sky, as he kept watching, turned a deep violet.

To move the class toward writing sentences like that, the same classroom method is used: we have in-class oral drills, in-class written drills, and homework assignments that ask students to write their own sentences imitating the pattern, sentences that we correct the next day on the board.

While the students are learning where they can place the subordinate conjunction in the sentence, I am making sure that they know the meaning of each conjunction. As before, using guided induction, I hand out a list of sentences that show the author using these conjunctions. Here, for example, is Marquez's use of five subordinate conjunctions:

1. As I lay face down, holding my knee against the floor of the raft, the wound throbbed painfully.
2. I could feel the rawness of the wound in my knee, which was paralyzed by swelling. It was as if my knee were immense, even larger than my body itself.
3. Since I was in such extreme discomfort, I looked for the fragment of oar in the bottom of the raft in order to lie down on it.
4. If the current had swept me into them, I would have been dashed against the rocks.
5. Once I hit the icy water, I felt better.

All told, they learn the word order and the meaning of the most commonly used subordinate conjunctions: *after, although, as, as if, because, before, even though, if, now that, once, since, so that, unless, when, whenever,* and *while*.

Once the class has become skillful at writing sentences using coordinated verbs, subordinate conjunctions, and participial phrases, I give them a test. Here, for example, are the directions for a test on subordinate conjunctions:

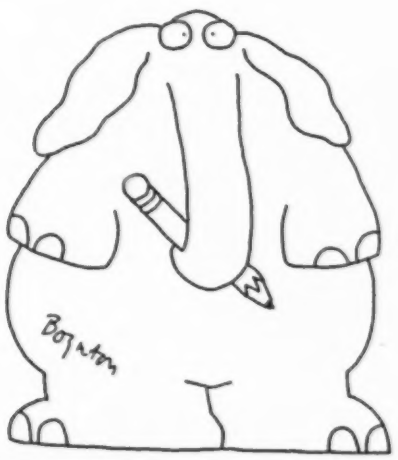
1. Write a sentence that uses "although" at the beginning.
2. Write a sentence that uses "now that" at the beginning.
3. Write a sentence that uses "whenever" to begin the last clause in the sentence.
4. Write a sentence that uses "because" immediately after the subject.
5. Write a sentence that uses "even though" at the beginning and "when" to end the sentence.

Around the middle of the semester, after we have studied coordinated verbs, "-ing," subordinate conjunctions, and "who," "which," "where," and "whose," the students start writing word order that has a certain flow. Here, for example, are one student's homework sentences. She was asked to write sentences placing "who" after the subject and after an object.

1. Peter, who has waited for the bus, saw and called Tony, who was his sister's friend.
2. Lisa, who was having a birthday party, poured beer into the glass and gave it to John, who was her friend.

Here is the same student using "which":

1. She planted the apple tree, which grew up so fast and stood next to the gate.
2. Judy is wearing a gold neck-lace, which Sam bought at the gold shop and gave her on Judy's birthday.



After we read each sentence and clarify the words, I explain the meaning of *as, as if, since, if,* and *once*. Then, as always, we drill them orally, in class, and students write their own. Their homework assignment is clear: Write five sentences of your own. Use *as, as if, since, if,* and *once*.

And this same student combining two and three word-order components:

1. Looking at the sky, Jenny saw the beautiful moon, which was round and bright.
2. Sitting in the garden, the dog, which had keen ears, was barking when he heard the sound of the steps.

Although there is a little something un-English about these sentences, they do show that the student is assimilating the word-order units and consequently writing English word order. She is, to be sure, an exceptional student—very intelligent and intensely eager—but when she wrote these sentences, she was in the next to the lowest ESL class at Pasadena City College. Most of the students' sentences do not flow as well as these, but there is clear progress toward fluency.

When we use the sentences in novels and short stories as models for students to imitate, we generate for ourselves and for the students a great advantage—excitement. We become excited because the sentences in *Charlotte's Web* and in *The Story of a Ship-wrecked Sailor* are real sentences written by real authors and because those sentences display a level of thought and feeling far deeper than the sapless sentences contrived by the authors of grammar and composition textbooks to illustrate some imposed orthodoxy about writing. When ESL students read a story, see the sentence "S V and V, -ing . . . " in that story, study the word order, then practice it, they gain the confidence and knowledge to pick up their pen and write a sentence of their own just like that one.

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Mike Riberd has been teaching IA, IB, and American literature for a long time, but in the last few years he has become very enthusiastic and involved with all the ESL students who are coming to Pasadena City College. He finds it gratifying to see their eagerness to learn English and a pleasure to try to respond to it. So, for about the last seven or eight years, he has had at least one ESL class each semester.

Although Dr. Riberd's Ph.D. is in English, with a specialty in American literature, he has had an abiding interest in language and linguistics, so the problems of teaching ESL students swept him up right away.

IN-CLASS ESSAYS

(Continued from Page 16)

While one of our primary goals as writing instructors is to help students discover an effective process for drafting and revising papers, we certainly are not invalidating this goal by using impromptu in-class writing in our composition classrooms. By having students plan, organize, and draft an impromptu essay, and then by sharing with them and having them employ the criteria with which we evaluate it, we are demystifying the grading process while also reinforcing a responsible awareness of effective writing. And by reading these essays holistically—by ourselves, with our colleagues—we are benefiting both the students and ourselves.

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For the last five years Lenny Bailey has been teaching freshman composition, basic writing, and writing essays under pressure at Butte College, while also regularly teaching freshman composition at CSU, Chico. In writing this article on impromptu essay writing, he was quite aware of the necessity to revise, redraft, rework, and wishes to thank Sue Harless, a colleague at Butte College, for helpful comments during the drafting process.

MUTUAL BENEFITS

Advanced Comp Students Connect With High School Writers

by SISTER J. ADELE EDWARDS
Mount St. Mary's College—Doheny Campus

In May 1990, I met with the English faculty of one of our local feeder high schools in central Los Angeles. Since several of their graduates have enrolled in our AA degree program over the past years, we discussed some mutal problems and techniques in teaching English to multicultural students. During the discussion one of the teachers suggested the possibility of having our college students read and correct papers from the high school students. I promised to submit this idea in September to the Advanced Composition instructor.

By mid-summer I learned that I was to teach this course. My next step was to ask my students, the majority of whom were in the education program, if they wanted to participate in this optional project. Eleven of the eighteen said they were interested. The high school counselor who had initiated the original May meeting collected papers from the tenth grade Honors English teacher and sent them to me. I distributed the essays to my students but without any background on the high school writers.

Once the college students had read and corrected the papers, we took time in our class to discuss their observations and responses. The frustration level was high. They did not want to discourage the tenth graders but also wanted them to see their weaknesses. I reminded my students that this is a reality they would face as future teachers. They decided to correct errors and write comments but not give any grades. Some also wrote notes to the high school student, offered additional help, and enclosed their name, address, and phone number.

After collecting and reading the corrected papers, I gave the college students who did them extra credit. I also realized they had used my approach to correcting papers and writing comments as models for theirs. At least I was assured they had been reading my comments. This was an unexpected, positive result of the project.

Another plus came in the form of thank-you notes from the tenth graders to the college students. All of the high school students expressed gratitude, and some hoped this process would continue. One said, "forever."

Unfortunately, lack of time and work load on the college students' part prevented another exchange of papers. However, if and when I teach this class again, I will definitely repeat this mutually beneficial project. I also encourage a similar exchange for any college English teachers who have or could initiate contact with a local high school English department. The possibilities for better writers and community relations are limitless.

Sister Adele Edwards currently teaches part-time in the English department. Her other half-time job is to direct the STEP (Strides Toward Educational Proficiency) program, a pre-college experience for high school seniors who come primarily from five inner-city Catholic schools. The program tries to motivate them to attend college and to improve their basic skills. Sister Adele was formerly a co-director of Region VII and an ECCTYC board member.

WILD WORD SOCCER

(Continued from Page 17)

by asking a student to "stump the stars" with vocabulary words, then pick someone else in the class to do the same. The process can continue as long as it's useful, but students usually don't want to stop. I often have to ask the current quizmaster for "one more" dazzling definition to wind things up when it's time to move on.

I recently dittoed up a glossary of poetry terms for my 123 class to define. The day I'd planned to open with the WWS quiz, I was unavoidably delayed. When I walked in about seven minutes late, Sandy K. had already chalked up a grid (fuschia and cerise—they had obviously tired of plain old blue and green) and was quizzing her classmates on the list.

"Aubade," she said, distinctly.

"Dawn song," shouted Miriam L.

"Can you give me an example?"

"Give us our point! Give us our point!"

"Sonnet . . . . ummmmm."

"Eyhnhhh." Sandy buzzed, quiz-show fashion.

"One of the sonnets, right?" Mark-the-hulk.

"That's not what I've got here."

"Stick to the book!"

"The Sun Rising, by John Donne. Page 527." Ana Paula, of course.

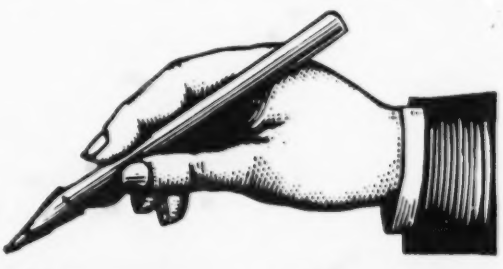
Last Halloween I asked students to conduct WWS in my 110 class while I, dressed as Charlie Chaplin, mimed clues to the words they proposed; it turned into an hilarious half-hour game of charades, before we decided to concentrate on the mysteries of parallel structure. ("Who can give me an example of a sentence with an error in parallel construction? Ten points!") Energy was high that evening and we conducted nearly the whole first hour of the class in the WWS mode, giving points for correct answers to the book's exercises as well as definitions of such words as "ghoul," "Azriel," "cauldron," and even "Hallow'een."

WWS can be risky: it's on your feet, no-holds-barred, spontaneous, high-wire teaching. Often, I'm not satisfied with the definitions students come up with but find I can't think of anything more accurate myself. I mean, you *think* you know what the word "traduce" means, but do you really? Out comes the dictionary, and we all find out.

WWS is not "gradable"—it moves too fast for even the canniest T.A. to keep up with—but I think that is one of its virtues. Last summer a ferociously motivated student, already enrolled at St. Mary's, complained that the game was "juvenile" and a "waste of time" because it didn't contribute to his grade. I explained to him that it was a kind of warm-up exercise for the work that *did* go in the gradebook and suggested he spend more time doing the reading so he could participate more in class. He did.

No one is judging, grading, weighing, correcting here. We're all having fun with the material, the teacher (obviously) as much as anyone. The speed of the game encourages a kind of class brainstorming, and the non-judgmental nature of it encourages risk-taking. Students seem to lose their self-consciousness as the game heats up; they shout their responses out freely, first as "answers" to the questions and then—when things really get rolling—as questions of their own in dialogue with me and with each other. Perhaps the greatest value of the game is that, after getting things started, *WWS is easy to abandon* in favor of a hot discussion.

WWS is also versatile—any material that requires a study of vocabulary and facts can inspire the game—and can take off in any direction the teacher and students want it to go. A colleague of mine who teaches in the sociology department uses WWS to quiz his students on names and dates as well as vocabulary. It is the spirit of play and competition that seems to count—and the willingness to take risks.



In the spirit of play, I can take a few chances, too—gently noodging the timid and recalcitrant (Brian is just sitting there, knowing all the answers!) or calling on the blanker faces to find out who has and has not read and prepared the assignment.

But I am careful not to violate the spirit of child's play with any attempt at formal evaluation. The sense of risk and "receptivity" which WWS can create is fragile and easily squelched by "left-brain" analysis and criticism. At its most effective, WWS can help generate the kind of situation in which ". . . each minute, each activity is experienced as 'now' rather than as a worried look into the future" (Rico 54)—or the gradebook.

Wild Word Soccer works, I suspect, because it recognizes and honors and liberates—if only for a few minutes—the child in each of us who *needs* to play—and to learn.

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Madeline Puccioni teaches at Diablo Valley College and Solano College. She's had several plays produced in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and, of course, Auckland [NZ], and is working on a film script about Lola Montez.

HUMANITIES AND DEMOCRACY

(Continued from Page 6)

to consider and to expose the ideology of what we do in the classroom, its social and political implications. Otherwise there will be a tremendous fallout in mistrust and alienation from our unwillingness to say what it is we are actually doing. The problem in exposing these assumptions and showing that learning must proceed from some assumptions about what is important is that a large part of our training in the humanities or the sciences has stressed that there is NO implicit ideology or hidden assumptions. We just give "the facts" or "the truth."

In the humanities, especially, this seemingly "natural" or "innate" or "human" insight is itself a powerful ideological tool. But students need to understand the ideology of method in all areas of study. "Reading" is never a neutral term, because there are always many things we bring to what we read. Frequently a good number of them are not germane to interpreting what we read, but students should be made aware of the process—NOT so that we can say every truth is relative or subjective, but to demonstrate the necessary interaction of reader and work in the creation of meaning—the student as active participant rather than passive receptacle. We should try therefore to expose to students what they bring to the text that they themselves are not aware of. Then the work itself can be redefined not in terms of its "greatness" but as a vital and sufficient web whose interest comes from its ability to take in, turn, and transform so many of those readings for such a length of time. It is impossible to teach originality and innovation, but we can teach how to speak of matters of common interest yet with an individual voice. The experience of reading ought to be both a revelation of assumptions and an undermining or expansion of them—a process that is often simultaneous. "Aha" is a revelation of prejudice as well as insight.

Much modern literary theory has argued that texts have no determinate meaning, that is, there is no one ultimate way finally to understand them. That, I think, is true, and the sooner students do not believe that there is only one way to understand anything the better off we will be. But the lack of a single meaning does not mean that *any* meaning is valid. The openness of texts to the world and to alternate readings makes their meaning not indeterminate but complex.

The crucial element is less the final meaning than the willingness of the teachers to let their own readings be permeable to the world. Virginia Woolf, in her essay "Craftsmanship," spoke of the way the multiple truths in language are imaged in the multiple meanings of words (and, I would add, stories). Whose life has been really enhanced by being told that Shakespeare's basic theme is appearance versus reality? But whose sense of the relation between theater and life has not been expanded by the way in which Shakespeare focuses on this central question of social life and public affairs? Rather than a passive relation to a master work, reading, I repeat, should be an activity that draws out and develops the will of the student in a way that will make him or her a better citizen and understander of the world in general.

As teachers, therefore, we should strive to be models of a full understanding of the world, giving our students a sense of not only integrated knowledge but also an integrated LIFE. Only in this way will the classroom be made permeable to the world and the world to the classroom. The crisis we face is not so much a crisis of education as a crisis of attention—what to pay attention to and how much to give it. To make an analogy between rock lyrics and Renaissance poetry, or MTV and story-telling is not necessarily pandering, but performing a theoretical act that unites something students think they know to what they don't know, defamiliarizing the familiar and familiarizing the strange. Thus we may hope to create an engaged and aware audience—that doesn't just know the great works and the great examples, but knows in some way how to sift and winnow the tremendous amount of information we get every day.

In conclusion, let me return to Tocqueville,

with whom so many discussions of democracy begin. He said, "When there is no more hereditary wealth, class privilege, or prerogatives of birth, and when every man derives his strength from himself alone, it becomes clear that the chief source of disparity between the fortunes of men lies in the mind. Whatever tends to invigorate, expand, or adorn the mind rises instantly to a high value." It is my hope that the humanities, considered as a way of knowing and understanding, might make those words come true for students not only in the classroom but for the rest of their lives.

NOTICES

(Continued from Page 8)

Abstracts of five hundred words are due 1 July 1991; manuscripts of fifteen to twenty-five pages are due 15 January 1992. Send inquiries and abstracts to JoAnna Stephens Mink, Dept. of English, Mankato State University, Mankato, MN 56002-8400.

ESSAY COLLECTION FOR CCCC

1 August deadline. The National Two-Year College Council of CCCC plans a collection of essays tentatively titled *Two-Year College Students: Essays for a New Century*. Essays may explore teaching linguistically and culturally diverse students, adult students, returning women, at-risk students, 2+2 students, honors students, and others. Other essays may deal with new pedagogy and curricula needed for such students and with appropriate teacher preparation for the next generation of two-year college teachers.

Send one-page proposals for essays to or request additional information from Mark Reynolds, Jefferson Davis Community College, P.O. Box 33, Brewton, AL 36247.

QUILT AS METAPHOR

1 August deadline. For a collection of essays, the editors solicit contributions that analyze quilts and quilting as textile texts, cultural commentary, and political acts. Interviews, photographs, and other forms of nontraditional discourse will be considered. Literary works that use quilting metaphorically may be studied.

Submit inquiries and four-page abstracts to Judy Elsley, Dept. of English, Weber State University, Ogden, UT 84404-1201.

COMMUNICATION invites submissions exploring the following topics on which it hopes to publish articles over the next three years:

- Literacies Inside and Outside the Academy
- Gender, Writing, and Pedagogy
- Race, Writing, and Pedagogy
- Rediscovering Lost Rhetorics

Implementing the CCCC's "Statement of Principles and Standards for the Postsecondary Teaching of Writing." (The Statement, a response to the Wyoming Resolution, appeared in the October 1989 issue of *CCC*; authors citing the Statement should use this version.)

CCC will continue to publish articles on a wide range of subjects relating to composition and its teaching. Follow the guidelines for anonymous submissions outlined on the back of the title page of each issue of *CCC*.

THE WRITING LAB JOURNAL invites manuscripts. Four copies should be sent to Nancy Grimm and Diana George, Department of Humanities, Michigan Tech University, Houghton, MI 49931 (BITNET: DGEORGE@MTUSYS5). Inquiries about book reviews should be addressed to Ed Lotto, Learning Center, Lehigh University, Bethlehem, PA 18015 (BITNET: EEL2@LEHIGH).

PIKESTAFF FORUM seeks substantive, pithy book reviews—*not* scholarly essays—of recent novels, collections of short stories, and poetry published by small presses and university presses. Reviews should be insightful, informative, and focused on the works themselves. Send manuscript with SASE to Jim Elledge, Book Review Editor, *Pikestaff Forum*, English Department, Illinois State University, Normal, IL 61761-6901.

The **WRITING LAB NEWSLETTER** is a monthly publication to promote interchange of information and ideas for those who work in writing centers and language arts centers or those who work with writing in tutorial settings. Articles discuss methods and goals of tutorial writing, describe specific programs and centers, consider administrative concerns of writing labs, offer research reports, etc. Also included are reviews of materials and books, conference announcements, and a monthly column by and for peer tutors. The newsletter is a publication of the national Writing Centers Association, an NCTE Assembly. Manuscripts are invited and should be no longer than ten to twelve pages. Please enclose a self-addressed envelope with stamps clipped (not pasted). For those who wish to join the newsletter group, a yearly donation of $10.00 ($15.00 for Canadian readers) is requested. (Sorry, we have no invoices, so prepayment is appreciated.) Please send checks made payable to Purdue University to Muriel Harris, editor, *Writing Lab Newsletter*, Department of English, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN 47907.

ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior Colleges

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